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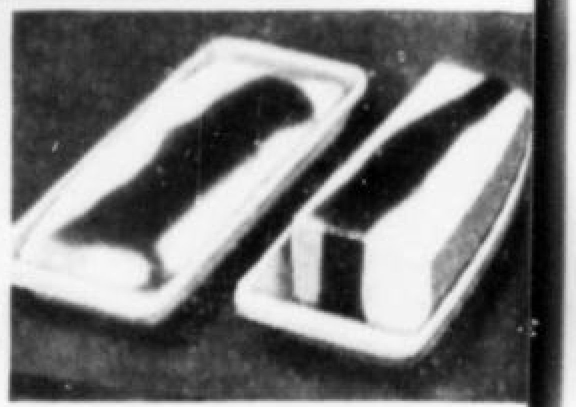

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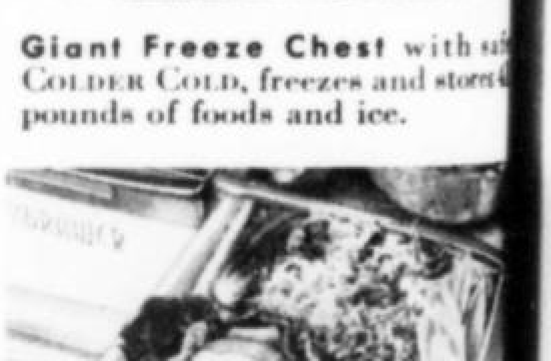

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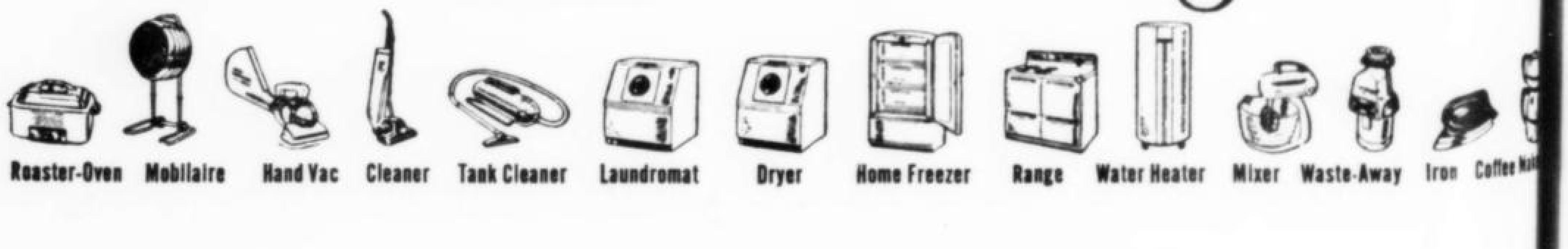

COMMENTARY

CONGRESS BLOCKS THE CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM

How to Break the FEPC Log Jam

SCOTT FOWLER

At 3:15 AM on February 23, the House of Representatives held its sixty-third roll call of the present session. For more than fifteen hours, the House had been sitting without a break. It was the eighth roll call of the day, and there had been an endless series of parliamentary shenanigans: quorum calls, votes by division, motions to adjourn, motions on amendments. There were frequent and bitter clashes in the debate, but nothing that was said in the long hours of talk could possibly have been new to any member. Yet four hundred Congressmen—in the middle of the night—sat through the roll call to the bitter end. Obviously it was no ordinary roll call.

Caught in the quicksand of Congressional maneuvering and partisan politics, the administration has yet to get through a Fair Employment Practices act, the very cornerstone of the Truman civil rights program. This despite the tremendous strides in assuring equal employment opportunity for America's minorities that have been made in recent years by state and municipal governments, as well as the nation's courts. Scott Fowler—the name is a pseudonym—here analyzes the recent defeats suffered by the civil rights forces in the House of Representatives, and suggests what may be more fruitful tactics for the coming battle in the Senate and in the country at large. Mr. Fowler has followed the development of FEPC at first hand since its inception almost nine years ago.

The clerk began to drone through the roster with "Abbitt, Abernethy, Addonizio, Albert, Allen of Louisiana, Allen of California, Allen of Illinois. . . ." After twenty minutes of names and responses, the roll call ended. Sam Rayburn, the Speaker of the House, glanced at the results handed to him by the clerk, and rapped his gavel. A gallery half filled with tired spectators perked up. The House stilled.

"On this roll call," Rayburn intoned, "the yeas were two hundred and twenty-one, and the nays were one hundred and seventy-eight. The motion is carried and the amendment is adopted."

To those who had supported FEPC—Congressmen and private groups alike—it was a moment of let-down, of anti-climax, and, above all, of having been wearily through all of this before.

The House of Representatives had substituted the "weak, educational" McConnell (Rep.-Pa.) bill for the "strong, enforceable" Powell (Dem.-N.Y.) FEPC bill.* To make the substitution, more than one hundred Republicans joined more than one hundred Southern Democrats. Up to that point the bulk of the Republicans had lined up solidly with the Northern Democrats through seven roll calls to keep FEPC before the House. And then they switched. From 278 votes on the first roll call, the pro-civil rights group shrank to 178 votes on the eighth roll call. The defections were overwhelmingly Republican.

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*Powell's bill provided that when the FEPC found persuasion and discussion unavailing in halting discrimination, it could issue a cease and desist order enforceable in the federal courts. The McConnell bill carries no enforcing provisions.

It had taken eight years of legislative struggle to get a roll call vote. At long last, every member had had to calculate his own political risk, and stand up and be counted on FEPC. No one could deny that this was an unexpected defeat. What discouraged the groups fighting for FEPC was the fear that they had achieved their greatest possible strength in the House—and it had not been enough. Their whole Congressional campaign for civil rights had been built around FEPC, admittedly the "toughest" part of the program. For years their strategy had been based on the belief that if they could only get FEPC to a vote, they could win it. Now it appeared that, even in the House, there was no stable majority for it. The margin, to be sure, was small; a switch of twenty-three votes would have prevented the substitution of the McConnell for the Powell bill. But additional votes are not likely to come from the one-party constituencies that provided the opposition this time. Neither rural Republican districts in the Midwest and New England, nor Southern Democratic ones, can be expected to send an appreciably greater number of pro-FEPC members to the House in the near future.

FEPC still does, of course, live in the 81st Congress in the form of the McConnell bill. But even though the pro-FEPC Congressmen, in desperation, voted for it as better than nothing, it is hardly a robust bill, and its chances of surviving the Senate—even in a weakened form—are slim.

THESE Congressional troubles are not new. No federal civil rights laws have been enacted since 1875. In the meantime the tempo of civil rights progress has quickened in other arms of government, in political parties, in private organizations, and in public opinion. Since the end of the war, the whole country has come alive with a new sensitivity to the needs of thirty million citizens whose position in the American community is limited by prejudice and discrimination. The last presidential election was fought out, at least in part, on the issue. President Truman risked his political neck and split his party by taking a determined and uncompromising stand on civil rights. Both major parties were committed to federal fair employment laws by their 1948 conventions.

Since the election, the President has continued to take a forthright position on civil rights in the executive branch. Segregation in the armed forces is being dissolved at an ever-quickening pace. A fair employment practice set-up for the two million employes of the federal government is beginning to administer a presidential directive against discrimination. In Washington, DC, the civil rights cockpit, the Interior Department is insisting on unsegregated use of swimming pools.

The federal courts, too, have indicated a new willingness to open old questions about segregation and other civil rights. Already the Supreme Court has held that restrictive covenants may not be enforced in courts of law. Segregation in interstate transportation and in higher education is now being tested. In all of these cases, the Department of Justice has placed the United States government on the side of civil rights by filing briefs as "friend of the court."

Throughout the country, states and cities are beginning to act on their own. Ten states have fair employment practice laws, almost fifty cities have some sort of local "human relations" agency. In sports, college fraternities, and other kinds of group activity, definite gains have been made. Public opinion is better informed on the issue than at any time since the post-Civil War era. A recent Gallup poll on FEPC showed forty-eight per cent of the public favoring a federal law, with forty-one per cent against, and eleven per cent undecided.

Yet not one of the recommendations to Congress of the President's Committee on

Civil Rights has found its way into law. Not one of the more than two hundred civil rights bills introduced in this 81st Congress (many of them identical or parallel) has been enacted.

Properly, the groups pressing for civil rights have made Congress their major target. (Whether it was equally proper to put FEPC at the heart of the program is another question; in any case the commitment was made.) Moreover, in each succeeding Congressional encounter, the advocates of FEPC have done a better job, and have shown that they learn from experience, though, of course, there are still gaps in the over-all strategy. In order to appreciate the progress that has been made, and to understand the nature of the present impasse, here is a necessarily brief FEPC Congressional chronology up to the present session.*

1941: FEPC originated as a serious national issue in the drive of Negro leaders to win industrial training and skilled jobs for their group. After continuous frustration, a "March on Washington" movement was organized by A. Philip Randolph. Thousands of Negroes were to descend on Washington to air their grievances about industrial discrimination. This would have been a political disaster for the Roosevelt administration at home and for the anti-Axis nations abroad. Mayor LaGuardia, then head of the Office of Civilian Defense, was assigned to deal with the Negro leaders. A series of conferences resulted in the issuance of a presidential executive order (June 25) which made discrimination in defense industries and government illegal. At about the same time, Rep. Marcantonio introduced a bill in the House to make this policy permanent.

1942: A federal committee on Fair Employment Practices began to function as a tiny agency, investigating discrimination in what had become "war industries." Another FEPC bill was introduced in the House by Marcantonio, while Senator Mead introduced a bill banning discrimination by government contractors. Both bills died in committee.

1943: A new Congress (the 78th) having been elected, new FEPC bills were introduced. Once more, the House bill was buried in committee. The Senate version survived its committee test, but was never brought to the floor. President Roosevelt reconstituted the FEPC, strengthened it with a new executive order, and expanded it until it had 15 field offices. In the next three years more than 30 public hearings were held, and about 8,000 complaints of discrimination were processed. Throughout this time, FEPC relied on publicity as its main sanction, although behind this it had the presidential wartime powers, especially the power to seize factories. Southerners in Congress responded to the growth of FEPC and its actions with a stepped-up propaganda campaign against it.

1944: The Southerners struck at the administration of the FEPC by tying up the President's power to finance it from his emergency war funds. From this point on, FEPC had to go to Congress for money. In a tangled fight in both houses, administration supporters managed to extend the Committee's life for another year. Meanwhile, FEPC's protagonists began to plan for a Congressional fight, and organized a national committee headed by Senators Robert F. Wagner and Arthur Capper. More than one hundred organizations supported it. Bills to make FEPC permanent were reported favorably by sympathetic Labor and Education Committees in both houses, but failed to reach a vote in either chamber.

1945: A bitter and protracted wrangle over money for FEPC ended in victory for a coalition of hostile Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans. FEPC was starved into ineffectiveness, in spite of a new executive order by which President Truman had hoped to continue it. The effort to make FEPC permanent was stopped cold in the House, where every technique by which the bill could have been brought to the floor failed. In the Senate, FEPC was again reported out of committee favorably, but no effort was made to bring it to a vote in the full body.

1946: In June, the appointive FEPC breathed its last. Henceforth, the Congressional battle was over the establishment of a new agency. In the House, the situation was unchanged, with the FEPC advocates unable to bring the bill to the floor. For the first time, the Senate began to debate the bill, and the Southerners promptly played their trump card—the filibuster. It worked, and FEPC never came to a vote.

1947-1948: For the first time in its history, FEPC was taken up in a Congress controlled

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*A classic study of the period 1941-1946 is "FEPC —A Case History of Parliamentary Manoeuver," by Will Maslow, *University of Chicago Law Review* (Volume 13, page 407).

by the Republican party. Once again, bills were favorably reported by committees in both the House and the Senate. And once again, they failed to reach the floor for a vote.

FROM the experiences of four successive Congresses, the civil rights groups had learned several lessons. First: a substantial body of Republicans, breaking with the traditional espousal of Negro equality by their party, would trade their key committee votes on civil rights to the Southerners in exchange for support on the conservative side of a number of economic issues (as Taft-Hartley, for instance). Second: these Republicans were able to horse-trade in this manner without running too great a political risk because they could do it surreptitiously. They never had to expose themselves because there were never any roll call floor votes on FEPC. The front work was done by the Southerners, who made political capital of it back home. Third: the administration—as much as it might favor FEPC—would not push it at the risk of jeopardizing its foreign and domestic programs. And those programs could not be enacted without Southern votes, even in the new Truman Congress.

Above all, the civil rights forces had learned the importance of the rules by which the House and the Senate do business. These rules (obviously all parliaments must have them) are designed to expedite action by a majority of the legislature without unduly curtailing the right of a minority to make its case. Put another way, the rules are supposed to permit as much freedom of discussion and debate as is consistent with legislative efficiency. By the time the 81st Congress had convened, it was abundantly clear that the fate of FEPC, and of all civil rights legislation, was inextricably bound up with the need for revising the rules of the House and Senate.

TWO consequences of the abuse of the rules of the House and the Senate by determined minorities are especially relevant to FEPC. The Senate is so jealous of the right of every member to be fully heard that it leaves itself open to a filibuster, by which a determined minority can tie up the chamber indefinitely until the measure it opposes (and which it knows it cannot otherwise defeat) is withdrawn and another bill taken up. In the House, the rules governing debate are less "liberal" because they must cover a much larger membership. But legislation in the House, after being considered and reported by one of the committees, must be given the "green light" by the Rules Committee. This committee's ability to expedite or delay legislation makes it possible for a handful of members to exercise enormous power. If a bill is bottled up in the Rules Committee of the House, members may righteously swear their determined support in public, while they are privately relieved at not having to vote for it. The same is true of Senators who may claim they are for a bill which is being "filibustered."

As soon as the present Congress convened, the administration's leadership in both houses announced its determination to change the rules so that the will of the majority could find expression, and so that members and parties would be forced to stand up and be counted publicly. Opponents of FEPC almost universally fought these efforts; the exceptions were some liberal Southerners. They were so eager for a change of rules that they were willing to run the risk of losing their fight against compulsory civil rights bills.

In the Senate the first serious business of the 81st Congress was an effort to change the rules so that filibusters could be more effectively prevented. This was the first such attempt since 1917, when public fury over an anti-war filibuster had resulted in the adoption of a bi-partisan cloture rule which said that any sixteen Senators could petition for a vote to end a debate on any issue, and that debate would actually be ended if two-thirds of those present so voted. But before a bill can become the business of the Senate, a motion must be made, and carried, to "bring it up." And the Senate, years ago, decided that it could not use the cloture rule against filibustering on "the motion to bring up."

The first filibustering of the 81st Congress —from February 28 to March 17, 1949—was directed at a joint effort by administration leaders and some Republicans to close this loophole in the Senate rules. The Senate rule *was* finally changed—but not in the way the civil rights Senators wanted it changed.

A bloc of eighteen Southerners, eight other Democrats, and twenty-two Republicans came up with a compromise that will probably see its first application in the Senate before this Congress adjourns. The application will almost certainly be on FEPC, and it will probably result in defeat for the legislation. For the new rule—although it does close the gap in the old one—actually makes it much harder (perhaps impossible) to enforce cloture. The old rule required that two-thirds of the Senators *present and voting* agree to close debate; the new one requires that two-thirds of the *full membership* must agree to end a filibuster. Under the old rule, roughly fifty-six votes were usually needed to enforce cloture; under the new one it will take sixty-four. When they tried to end the 1946 filibuster against FEPC, pro-civil rights Senators could muster only forty-eight votes. It is hard to see how, in the foreseeable future, there will be enough votes to enforce cloture on FEPC or any other civil rights bill. To do so would take almost every Republican vote and almost every non-Southern Democratic vote.

But the major fact about the new cloture rule is that it cannot be used against an effort to change the rule itself. So that any attempt to change the number of votes needed to invoke cloture runs right up against a freely permitted filibuster.

The Republicans have, nevertheless, stoutly maintained that the new cloture rule can work on civil rights legislation, and they will probably try to invoke cloture against a filibuster on a Senate bill parallel to the "weak, educational" McConnell bill. The administration has delayed Senate consideration of FEPC, partly because of discouragement at its defeat in the effort to get what it considers to be a usable cloture rule. But it has pledged a Senate test before adjournment, and will undoubtedly try to make the test on a Senate parallel to the "strong, enforceable" Powell bill. Most observers agree that *if* FEPC comes to a vote, one of the Senate bills will pass. It is, however, a big "if," considering the present cloture rule and the probability of a filibuster.

IN THE House of Representatives, on the other hand, the first round ended with a victory on the rules for the civil rights forces as clear as the defeat in the Senate. Unlike the upper chamber, whose rules do not change with each new Congress (the Senate is "continuous" since only one-third of its members stand for re-election at any one time), the House adopts its rules afresh on the first day it meets. When it met in 1949, a determined group of pro-civil rights, administration Democrats were ready to clip the powers of the Rules Committee. Seven Democrats (Eberharter, Sabath, Kirwan, Mansfield, Granger, Carroll, and Holifield) had, with the approval of Speaker Sam Rayburn and the other leaders, become a steering committee to lead the fight. They proposed to amend the House Rules to provide for a new way to bring bills blocked by the Rules Committee to the floor.

Theoretically, the Rules Committee is supposed to be an instrument of the majority party in the House, reporting bills with the priority assigned to them by the party leadership. Actually, on FEPC, it reflects the division of the House into three parts. There are eight Democrats on it, but four of them—Smith (Va.), Cox (Ga.), Colmer (Miss.), and Lyle (Tex.)—are Southerners. The four Northern Democrats are Sabath (Ill.), Madden (Ind.), McSweeney (Ohio), and Delaney (N.Y.), and the four Republicans are Brown (Ohio), Allen (Ill.), Herter (Mass.), and Wadsworth (N.Y.) On the basis of previous experience, the civil rights groups knew that they could not count on this committee to reflect the opinion of the House on FEPC. Therefore, they supported the proposal of the seven pro-administration Democrats to the effect that if the Rules Committee does not report a bill to the floor within twenty-one legislative days after receiving it, the chairman of the sponsoring committee may bring it up himself. He may bring it up, however, only on the second and fourth Mondays of the month.

This revision of the House Rules was adopted after a key roll call vote on which 225 Democrats and 49 Republicans supported it. FEPC bills were promptly dropped in the hopper, but six months went by before hearings were held on the Powell bill. The hearings were before a subcommittee of the Education and Labor Committee, and were overwhelmingly favorable to FEPC. The bill was reported favorably on August 2, and the fight to bring it to the floor began.

Four separate channels were available to the supporters of FEPC, and they used every one to force the bill to a vote. The first was the Rules Committee, which had the power to bring it up at any time. The second was the new "21-day rule," under which Chairman John Lesinski of the Education and Labor Committee could take the floor with the FEPC bill on the second or fourth Monday of a month, beginning twenty-one days after August 2. The third channel was the "discharge petition" by which the Rules Committee could be "discharged" from further consideration of FEPC, if 218 members signed a petition requesting it. And finally, there was the tactic of using "Calendar Wednesday." The House Rules require that each Wednesday the chairman of one of the committees shall be called on to bring up any bill which his committee wants considered. The chairmen are called up in alphabetical order by the names of their committees. Calendar Wednesday is usually passed over by a two-thirds vote of the House. This year the pro-FEPC members determined to insist on holding it until it was the alphabetical turn of the Education and Labor Committee, which could then bring FEPC to the floor.

All of these four avenues were used simultaneously, either actually to achieve consideration of FEPC, or to maneuver it into a better position. What was the fate of FEPC at each stage?

The Rules Committee: All efforts to get the committee to free FEPC for consideration by the House failed. On all but one of the committee votes, two of the Republicans (Herter and Brown) voted with the Northern Democrats in favor of FEPC, and two (Allen and Wadsworth) voted with the Southern Democrats against FEPC. This kept the committee tied up 6-6, which meant the bill could not be reported. One occasion, when Allen and Wadsworth were absent from a committee meeting, seemed particularly propitious for FEPC. Thereupon Brown promptly switched his vote so that the committee was still tied up, this time 5-5. At the next meeting when the Republicans were present, Brown switched back so that the tie was again 6-6.

But the Rules Committee was not content just to sit on FEPC. Its members knew that beginning on January 23 (the first Discharge Monday available) Chairman Lesinski could bring FEPC to the floor without them. A move was begun to *reverse* the reform made earlier in the session, to abandon the 21-day rule, and to restore to the Rules Committee its old powers. On January 20, this motion came before the House. It was defeated 236-183. But the move had won the anti-civil rights forces something. Speaker Rayburn (who had defended the 21-day rule against this attack) placated the defeated group by announcing that instead of Lesinski, he would recognize some other committee chairman with a "less controversial" bill.

The 21-Day Rule: Although it benefited other legislation opposed by the Rules Committee, the 21-day rule did nothing for FEPC. The Speaker simply did not recognize Lesinski who was trying to bring it up. The next available Discharge Day after January 23 was February 13, the day after Lincoln's Birthday, for which the House adjourned by unanimous agreement so that the Republicans could have time to attend their party's Lincoln Day dinners. Before another Discharge Day arrived, FEPC had come and gone.

The Discharge Petition: On the morning of January 23, when it was clear that Speaker Rayburn would not recognize Lesinski, Congressman Roosevelt filed a petition to discharge the Rules Committee from further consideration of FEPC. Getting 218 signatures on any discharge petition is very difficult; signing such a petition is frowned on by some of the potent leaders of both parties. Whether Roosevelt could have obtained the 218 signatures is dubious, although he did get more than a hundred in several days. But the petition became an academic matter when Rep. Adam Clayton Powell (Dem.) of Harlem (whose name was on the FEPC bill and who had fought hard for it) took the Republicans off the hook by accusing his colleague of acting "politically" in sponsoring the petition. Because Roosevelt was sponsoring it, Powell said, Republicans—particularly from New York—would refuse to sign it. Clare E. Hoffman (Rep.-Mich.), who was hostile to FEPC, joined in the attack. The upshot, according to Powell, was that he would have to file his own discharge petition. Roosevelt promptly offered to sign it, and even to withdraw his own if it were shown that Powell's could get more support. No more than six Republicans ever signed either petition. Regardless of Powell's view of Roosevelt's motives, his action ended what hope there was of bringing FEPC to a vote by a discharge petition.

Calendar Wednesday: Surprisingly enough, it was the little-used Calendar Wednesday device that finally brought FEPC to a vote. On January 25, there was not the necessary two-thirds vote to dispense with Calendar Wednesday, as is ordinarily done. Instead, the first committee, Armed Services, was called. Before Lesinski's committee's turn came, on succeeding Wednesdays, the Banking and Currency, Civil Service, and District of Columbia Committees were called. But finally, on February 22, after eight years of waiting, FEPC was called up on the floor of the House of Representatives.

THERE then began a grueling fight to prevent the Southerners from adjourning the House or wearing down the pro-FEPC forces. If action could be delayed until the House adjourned, FEPC would no longer be on the floor, and there would be no more Calendar Wednesdays in this session for the Education and Labor Committee. It was Washington's Birthday, which meant that precious time went for the traditional reading of the "Farewell Address." The whole gamut of time-killing parliamentary devices—and there are many of them—was run by the Southerners. A roll call vote takes about twenty minutes; there were seven during the day. A quorum call takes about twenty minutes; there were three of them. More than fifty amendments were offered, either to the Powell bill or to the two "weak" substitutes offered for it—the McConnell bill (supported by most of the Republicans) and the Steed bill (supported by the Southerners—but only as a cat's-paw).

The seemingly endless series of amendments offered by Southerners and Republicans included all sorts of things. Each required some sort of a vote, and at least a few minutes of debate. Some of them put the pro-FEPC members very much on the spot. On the one hand, some amendments (like the specification that the mere absence of Negro workers in a factory could not be taken as evidence of discrimination) probably made even the mildest bill unworkable. But to fight them would have meant playing into the hands of the Southerners, since it would have taken more precious time. Besides, these amendments were made to the McConnell bill, and the pro-FEPC supporters expected to make short shrift of it, and finally to pass the strong Powell bill without any amendments at all.

Finally, at 3:15 AM, the civil rights forces prepared to reap the harvest of their determined stand. They did not reckon, however, on the forthcoming Republican switch. The Southerners—who obviously had been tipped off—agreed to end debate. The first motion before the House was the substitution of the weak McConnell bill for the strong Powell bill. *Southerners and Republicans contributed about an equal number of votes to pass it.* The dilemma that confronted the

128 Democrats, 49 Republicans, and one ALPer who still preferred the now-dead Powell bill, was acute. They had fought the McConnell bill, and still opposed it. Perhaps it would pass the Senate and become law. Would that make it easier or harder to finally get an FEPC with teeth? Could the paralyzing amendments be struck off in the Senate, or in a conference between the two Houses? Almost all of the pro-FEPC members finally voted for the McConnell bill, which passed 240-177, the next day.

The confusion in the minds of those who had this decision to make was almost visible. Some members switched their votes in midstream. As the clerk went through his roll-call and came to the "D's," Yates of Illinois asked the Speaker to call the House to order. As Rayburn rapped his gavel, the attention of the members turned to the man who was to vote next. It was Dawson of Illinois, one of the two Negro members of the House and a highly-respected veteran. When he cast his vote for the McConnell bill, many Northern liberals breathed a sigh of relief and followed suit.

What will come in the Senate may possibly parallel what happened in the House, and if the outcome is the same, civil rights supporters will be divided in their view of it. Most of them will probably feel that something is better than nothing; that experience with the state laws has shown that, in any case, FEPC's do not use sanctions for some time after they are set up; and that it is usually easier to strengthen an existing agency than to create a new and more perfect one.

But whatever befalls FEPC in the balance of this Congress, enough has already happened to indicate several lines of approach for the future. Even if FEPC is set up on the strong McGrath-Powell bill basis, and certainly if it is set up on the weaker Taft-McConnell basis, there will be fights over future amendments and over budget appropriations—the Southerners' next line of retreat. The great change in the civil rights climate in the nation has not left Congress untouched. But Congress, it is clear, is more responsive to the pressure of sectional and special interests than to any general ideological atmosphere.

Future success or failure on FEPC will depend on how effectively the agencies fighting for civil rights legislation respond to the present "coalition" situation in Congress. There is reason for optimism in the fact that there is now a substantial minority in both Houses just as determined on one side of the civil rights issue as the Southerners have been for so long on the other. Between the two is most of the Republican bloc, trying to use the situation to its own advantage. The big, immediate job is to persuade the Republicans that it is not only principled, but also expedient, to stop shifting and really to support civil rights, and that they are damaging their political prospects by trading away their support of civil rights for conservative Southern votes on economic and social matters. But there are other ways, too, in which those who fight for FEPC might broaden their efforts.

First: the rules of the House and the Senate must be made a national issue. The more the public knows about these rules, the better it will understand who is really for and against FEPC. Legislative rules have a tremendous significance for every particular issue and for sound democratic government in general. Congressional procedure must certainly provide for the fullest discussion that is compatible with efficient law-making. It must also guarantee that the majority will prevails, and that the greatest opportunity is given the public to evaluate parties and lawmakers.

2. A better job must be done of going beyond the simple letters "FEPC" to explain the details of the bill which most groups now support. Not enough effort has been given to showing the ways in which the Powell bill takes into account reasonable objections to previous versions. The fact that the proposed commission could leave enforcement to the states if they had good laws and competent administration is not widely known. Nor is

the fact that it limits its application to plants which employ fifty or more people.

3. Broader Northern support must be rallied. Outside of the South, FEPC is not yet a national issue. The greatest gap (and it is reflected in Congressional voting patterns) is in rural areas where it is not known, but feared, or misunderstood. Businessmen who have supported FEPC have emphasized the loss of two to fifteen billion dollars per year that we suffer because of discrimination in employment. Farmers are keen students of markets, and underconsumption is something of great concern to all of them. At a time when farmers are concerned about shrinking markets and falling prices, it should be emphasized to them that fair employment legislation might well create new consumers among this country's minority groups.* There is a historical parallel here in the prohibition issue. Farmers were largely "drys" until they were informed about the market benefits that would come to them (as well as the rest of the economy) from repeal.

4. A similar effort should be made to link FEPC with the regional development needs of the South and the Southwest. It is not likely that any members of Congress from the deep South will stump their states for FEPC in the near future. But the very real and pressing needs of the South in education, industrialization, and power development offer an opening wedge for intelligent discussion.

5. It is the trade unions that have done what is probably the most significant job of teaching ever-larger groups that FEPC is not an issue for Negroes, Catholics, Jews alone. This is a crucial educational task, and requires as much effort as can be given to it.

6. Within the two major parties, the immediate challenge is the need to make Republican *leadership*—national and state—take the proper responsibility for the votes of its Senators and Congressmen. Responsible Republican leadership must be persuaded that flirting with the Dixiecrats will lead them to disaster in the North and the West. It took a long time for the Democrats to put their national needs ahead of their sectional ones; it is high time that the Republicans were made to realize the national political consequences of irresponsibly trying to profit from Democratic division.

Too often, FEPC advocates have sent their mail to the wrong address. In this year's campaign, for example, some groups spent a great deal of energy "reminding" members of Congress and the administration who needed little reminding. The big task is winning *new* support in Congress. Anyone who is in doubt as to where to go for that support has not studied the key roll call by which the McConnell bill was substituted for the Powell bill. *The margin of defeat was provided as much by the key Northern, populous, urban, industrial, unionized states, as by any other.* The six states outside the South with the largest Congressional delegations are New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, California, Ohio, and Michigan. They are certainly the states in which the pro-FEPC forces are strongest. Their potential vote for FEPC in Congress is 165. Yet only ninety-nine of their representatives voted against the substitution. The Democratic potential for FEPC was seventy-eight votes, of which seventy-four came through. Two California Democrats went wrong, while one from New York and one from Michigan were absent.

On the Republican side, only twenty-four of a potential eighty-seven voted against the substitution. *Fifty-one Republican votes (twenty-three would have changed the outcome) from these six states went for the McConnell bill as against the Powell bill.* Seven were from New York, nine from Pennsylvania, nine from Illinois, twelve from California (the whole Republican delegation), six from Ohio, and eight from Michigan. In addition there were twelve absences on the vote, three each from Illinois and Pennsylvania, and two each from New York, Ohio, and Michigan.

What makes these figures even more instructive is an analysis which had appeared in the December 1949 *Crisis,* official publication of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In a perceptive article called, "Does the Republican Party Want the Negro Vote?" the GOP record on *state* FEPC's is reviewed. Passing references are made to Indiana and Minnesota. But the article is primarily based on the defeats suffered by FEPC in five of the six states noted above (the sixth is New York, where the Republican record, at least on FEPC's enactment, was irreproachable). In each of these five states, FEPC was defeated by Republicans, aided by a rare Democrat. This certainly foreshadowed Congressional behavior.

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*See "The People vs. Discrimination," by Felix S. Cohen, COMMENTARY, March 1946.

Hindsight makes it clear that the greatest pressure to honor commitments to a real FEPC law should have been directed toward the Republican National Chairman, Republican state chairmen, and the Republican governors in these six states. They should have been given to understand that, as party leaders, the records of their *whole* Congressional delegation was their responsibility. They should have been informed that the votes in favor of FEPC of Republican members from districts whose populations were vigorously pro-civil rights did not constitute a genuine redemption of platform vows. The criterion should not be promises or the performances of a few legislative show-pieces. It should be the performance of the whole delegation in the state legislature or Congress. When the people vote for a party candidate, they have a right to expect that he bears more than a party label; they have a right to expect that he believes in its stated program.

7. Finally, the civil rights group in Congress needs still better organization for the next encounter. In the House test on FEPC, the pro-FEPC group seemed inadequately prepared and briefed. Published accounts give the impression that the Southerners were better coordinated, that their caucusing was more intensive, and that they were more ready to face any parliamentary eventuality. The pro-FEPC group often gave the impression of uncertainty, particularly on the Roosevelt discharge petition, the amendments offered to the McConnell bill, and the final decision on whether to accept the McConnell bill itself.

IT GOES without saying that, balanced against the determination and courage which the 178 stalwart civil rights Congressmen showed, these are small things. But with the growing tide of popular support for civil rights, there must be a corresponding growth in the skill of those who lead in the fight for them. Representative government can be counted on, now as always, to reflect the will of the enlightened majority—provided this majority and its leaders make full use of democracy's potential. This is, of course, not always easy. But it is never impossible.

A EUROPEAN DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

French Culture Is Doomed, Unless—

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

WE IN France hear it said all about us that French culture is being threatened. In practically all foreign countries, we are told, this culture has a smaller influence than in the past, and there is a crescendo of complaints about the importing into France of foreign ideologies—by this generally is meant American culture—which, it is claimed, may shatter our traditional cultural framework.

Is French culture really threatened? Can it be saved?

TO BE born into a culture—which happens to all of us—is to be born with an offer of a future, an offer which we cannot reject but which we are forced to accept and transcend, and which, in so doing, we transform into a new cultural situation. A culture is alive when the community of which it is an expression envelops and exceeds its own culture, when there is still, for each individual that is born, an ensemble of real possibilities of development corresponding to what he is seeking. Culture is thus continuous with the past and open towards the future.

By that same token, in order for a culture to remain alive, the autonomy and sovereignty of the community must be such that the thinker, artist, or man of religion will be able to go beyond problems and towards solutions.

If the community is enslaved or powerless, the artist or writer can conceive of no solutions, because these solutions do not lie in the hands of the community; and, in the case of a people reduced to utter slavery, culture disappears because there are no longer any solutions for which the writer, philosopher, painter, and musician can consider themselves responsible.

An intellectual in a sovereign country—since present-day communities, as far as their framework is concerned, are national—may feel, as Kafka said in his journal, that he is the bearer of a mandate that no one has given him.

Nevertheless he does have a mandate, which is, after all, that of thinking about the general problems and the particular problems raised in his time; life, death, love; war, the social structure with its injustices, the political or ethical problems of individuals. And a writer in a free community has the special mandate—and therein lies the greatness of the great—of considering himself responsible for everything: he has to offer *solutions for everything*. If you take a Tolstoy or a Dostoevsky, you will see that these great men took pride in their role and that their pride lay at the source of their achievement.

RECENTLY, a law was passed in France suppressing Coca-Cola as subversive of the French way of life. At about the same time, the distinguished Catholic novelist François Mauriac wrote an article in the conservative newspaper *Le Figaro* denouncing American culture as a menace in no way less threatening than the Russians. France, it would seem, is anxious and uneasy about the future of its culture. According to JEAN-PAUL SARTRE, one of that culture's foremost representatives in the eyes of the world, there is good reason for anxiety—though not necessarily for despair. In this essay, Mr. Sartre analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of French culture and suggests that its problems can be solved only within a supra-national, European framework. Mr. Sartre is well enough known—as Existentialist philosopher, novelist, critic, and political polemicist—to need no introduction. COMMENTARY readers will remember especially his articles, "The Situation of the Jew," "Portrait of the Inauthentic Jew," and "Gentile and Jew" in the issues of April, May, and June of 1948. This article is a condensed version of a speech given before the French League Against Anti-Semitism and was translated from the French by Bernard Frechtman.

When Tolstoy wrote *War and Peace,* he considered himself responsible, insofar as he could denounce it, for war itself, and he felt that he had to give an interpretation and description of war that would seem valid to an entire community. But this had a meaning for him only insofar as he thought that the community, warned by works of this kind, would feel a greater repulsion for war and consequently be less likely to enter into one. If, on the other hand, we assume that the community has the means neither for avoiding war nor making it, the problem that war presents becomes much less urgent and will be less tempting to the writer.

If, for example, there are no very great women writers—there are great ones such as Colette, but no *very* great ones—if, despite the fact that women have been writing for centuries, we do not find the equivalent of a Cervantes, a Tolstoy, or a Stendhal among them, it is not because their brain cells are any different from those of men, but essentially because the woman lives in a masculine universe for which she is not responsible. She does not take sides on the questions of war, justice, heroism, or wisdom because of the fact that these are questions involving the values of men and strictly reserved for men, values upon which she cannot act. A much more limited world is reserved for her: the world of the passions, of love, of psychology, and of nature. Just as one cannot imagine a woman writing *War and Peace* in the 18th or 19th centuries—not because she would have been incapable of doing so, but because she was outside the realm of martial values (she would not have known from her own experience anything about the horror of a battlefield, military heroism, or the chance and absurdity of so-called military planning)—so it cannot be denied that culture thrives when the body of individuals who contribute to it are responsible for the values of the community.

If, in addition, a community has so great an importance that to other communities it seems an important factor in their future, then the culture of this community has a special significance. It reflects future possibilities that come to the others only from outside; it reflects, as it were, their destiny. If so many people in the small countries bordering on Germany were tempted by Nazi culture and ideology, it was because Germany was, at that moment, a formidable imperialist power able to devastate and conquer them overnight. Thus her ideology took on a force, an urgency, and a value that were not contained in the ideas themselves, but were contained in the might capable of imposing them. In other words, at such times communities that are inferior in power examine the ideology and culture of a stronger country as if it were their destiny. A native of Luxemburg or Holland examining Nazi ideology might have said to himself, "This may be the ideology that will dominate my country for two hundred years."

Thus cultural ideas, quite independently of their internal value, have a potential of diffusion that depends upon the economic or military importance of the country supporting them. They acquire a certain universality. In a powerful country like 18th-century France, the writer achieved the universal through the particular. When Voltaire said that the Frenchman was the universal man in the 18th century, he meant, with a certain pride, that, generally speaking, all one needed to do was to be a Frenchman in order to be an example of the evolving cultural type that would prevail throughout the world. And the fact is that it did prevail, simply because French political hegemony implied, by the same token, a kind of diffusion of French ideas.

If, on the other hand, a country is small, threatened, and powerless, then its culture is profoundly affected.

It is not true that by being more Portuguese or more Dutch one will become more universal. It is not true, because other nations consider a small country to be an accident of history and politics, and the human type achieved in that country to be a provincialism and not a profound reality. So that when the writer of a small country seeks to communicate with the intellectuals of other nations, he immediately places himself on the level of the universal and the formal, fleeing the particularity of his own national culture.

Let us suppose that, as a result of political events, a small European nation borrowed elements of American culture and ideology. It would borrow them as something untranscendable, in the sense that they had their origin in a certain reaction to an economic and social structure in America that the borrower would be unable to change. And if the same nation that borrowed ideas from a foreign country had had a living culture in the past, it would be unable to reanimate that culture since it would no longer be a culture that the community transcended toward a future. The result would be that the small nation would find itself having two different and opposing cultures: one, a kind of revery about a destiny—this, the culture that came from abroad; the other, a cult of the past and a revery about the past—this, its own culture, half dead, replaced, and forgotten.

It is often assumed that ideas are exported like manufactured products or natural wealth; it is evident that certain small countries export watches or wheat, although their political power is inferior to that of the countries around them. It would seem that the same might hold for ideas. But what is true for natural wealth is false for culture. In the cultural realm it is clear that there are exchanges without reciprocity. Indeed, ideas, even when weak and trivial, *descend* from the stronger to the weaker, without *rising*, even when excellent, from the weaker to the stronger.

Or, rather, they do rise, but they exhaust their energy in rising and end by making no claim on the new community, by being nothing more than a cultural fact, and not a cultural possibility.

TODAY America is never smitten with a European idea. That is why we are apt to notice in Americans a kind of unfailingly indulgent superiority toward what we Europeans write or think. This is not because they are proud or arrogant: whereas our Dutch neighbors are intrigued or disgusted or excited about a French work because they are in the same situation as we, Americans receive ideas from us that are half dead and have absolutely no power to excite them; and this is so not only because their continent has different problems, but mainly because Americans do not see these ideas as *their* future. On the contrary, they see them as something that belongs to the past in relation to themselves, as the false future of a country of which they consider themselves to be the true future.

I never saw anyone in the United States amused or excited or saddened by Anouilh's beautiful play, *Antigone*. I still remember an American critic who wrote: "What gave the American producer the idea of trying to catch our interest through the primitive mores of a small Greek clan?" Taken this way, as if it were about an obsolete problem, the play *is* utterly devoid of interest. Similarly, I have often heard it said, in regard to the body of theories called Existentialist, which has representatives in England, Germany, Holland, and France, "Yes, poor Europeans, they've suffered." This is not at all the attitude of the European who refuses to adopt Existentialist ideas. He says, "It's idiotic, repulsive, it sickens me," but certainly not, "Poor France, she's suffered." This attitude is inconceivable where there is a homogeneity of problems, and therefore of culture.

And if, nonetheless, a writer in a small country becomes a constituent element of a great culture and compels recognition, as with Kierkegaard and Kafka, the countries with a great culture solicit this writer, annex him, as it were, and later on send him back to the small country in a form undreamed of by the latter. Very often elements are stolen from Europe that ten years later we find have become, in someone else's thinking and with a different twist, our destiny.

If we French were free to choose the countries with which to enter into mutual cultural relations, the inescapable conclusion would be that we ought to choose those with a political potential equal to ours, an equal history and equal problems, and ought, on the other hand, to abstain from all ideological commerce with countries of a higher potential. But we are not free to choose. The political, economic, demographic, and military hegemony of a country imposes cultural exchanges without reciprocity.

ELEMENTS that are naturally spontaneous to America and have a meaning there, can become ruinous for French culture. An American Negro writer who loves France, Richard Wright, said to me one day, with a kind of sadness, "In the last analysis, what I like about you is the very thing that may be the death of you." For indeed there is a French culture that, quite obviously, keeps going as the result of an international misunderstanding of France's position. If we find in France certain forms of culture, certain conceptions of life and intellectual activity not found elsewhere, they are bound up with an inadequate industrial equipment, a deficient birth rate, and a society based upon injustice. There is no doubt that if we do have a culture that, in a certain sense, sets up human values, individual and personal values that attract people like Wright, it is the result, in large part, of our not being a great industrial nation like America, where everybody is an employe, or like Russia, where everybody is a civil servant. It is precisely because we have not attained this degree of industrialization or social organization that we still offer values which, for many foreigners, have charm. What they do not always see is that it is the charm of the past.

In 1918 this was a profitable misunderstanding. We had won a war that ruined us demographically and helped further our decline in relation to the new powers; but at the same time the prestige of this victory maintained us for a long time at the same level in international opinion, so that the ideas and culture produced in France between 1918 and 1939 could still be looked upon as a genuine future by other countries. The way Proust was welcomed in the United States around 1925 or 1930 presupposed the entire French army behind him and the myth of the Frenchman as the best soldier in the world. Otherwise, only a few intellectuals would have been attracted to Proust, and only in the way Gide's *Journal*, for example, finds admirers today in America—that is, as testimony of a delightful past.

It was this misunderstanding that gave France another thirty years of strength and power in relation to other countries. But this misunderstanding vanished in the Second World War, so that we now face the following problem: In order to recreate a milieu in which our ideas can find a new potential and remain valid—not as a past, but as a future for other countries—we must re-equip and re-industrialize ourselves. But in order to regain this position, in order to re-equip and re-industrialize ourselves, we turn to America and, from then on, American culture and American ideology come to us inevitably along with bolts, manufactured articles, and cans of fruit juice. Since the future, for us, is becoming America, American ideas are, for us, the future.

The future perhaps—but not the past or the present. Insofar as they are presented as an actual culture for France, they too are a false culture.

GENERALLY speaking, the characteristic feature of European culture is a secular struggle against evil. I think that, in the last analysis, a French intellectual, writer, or philosopher merely expresses a feeling common to all members of the French community when he asserts that our society is badly made. Nothing can justify, nothing can redeem or explain, the death of a young man of twenty, in particularly horrible circumstances, when his destiny was not fulfilled; nothing can justify certain states of despair, certain injustices; even if they are rectified, the fact remains that they have caused suffering to thousands of men. Evil is inexpiable in the world, and European culture is certainly a reflection on the problem of evil and on the thought: "What can a man do, what can he be, what can he achieve, if it is granted that evil is in the world?"

Now, in general, evil is not an American concept. There is no pessimism in America regarding human nature and social organization. If I compare French with American rationalism, I would call American rationalism white, and French rationalism black. Whether we consider reason in Descartes, a reason that is both all-powerful and, in a sense, utterly absurd, since it merely reflects the truths God chooses to create; whether we consider reason in Pascal, who, though a scientist and rationalist, believed in reason only to define its limits; whether we consider it in our time, in Valéry, for example, where it is really a kind of light to which man clings in an absurd world—then we perceive that what has been called French rationalism has always been, in actual fact, pessimistic. French rationalism is a reflection on an irrational situation, accompanied by a profound feeling, even among the most rationalistic, in Voltaire, for example, that in the last analysis the universe at a certain point eludes reason. Reason is the struggle against a universe that everywhere escapes us and that we try to recapture; it is a kind of limited confidence in human freedom seen in a situation which is just about hopeless.

But reason in America, on the other hand, is first of all technical, practical, and scientific. It is immediately defined by its efficacy. It seems to go about proving either that the universe is rational or, at any rate—as the pragmatists and instrumentalists declare—that we can rationalize the universe. Consequently American rationalism is optimistic. This optimism has a profound significance upon which it is unnecessary to insist. We are familiar with American history. We see how there is room for optimism in America. But there is no doubt that when this optimism comes to Europe in American books that have been more or less popularized, it leads us straight to "scientism." And, in like fashion, the Russian type of optimistic rationalism similarly leads to a "scientism" that is destructive to culture. Problems then disappear. Whether we take "scientism" from the Americans or from vulgarized Marxist thought, we learn in both cases that truth is merely data, the facts, that all we need is to follow science the way a locomotive follows the rails, and that, consequently, there is nothing to seek for, there is no risk, there is no doubt, and there is no evil.

But the French writer, whatever he may be, has for centuries been under the impression that evil exists. This evil might have been the religious wars, the Jesuit culture Pascal attacked, or, in the age of the Encyclopedia, a certain conservatism. French writers have always waged a struggle for social justice against the powers-that-be and against established ideologies; not because French writers are more generous or intelligent or fair-minded than others, but because the cultural situation was such that it was practically impossible to take any other side; because, for example, the destiny of freedom of thought was bound up with the destiny of certain classes, as was seen in the 18th century, when the bourgeois and the writer joined forces.

Thus, there is a tendency, which is a real and living tendency in France, I shall not say (since the word has been so run down) to "engage" or "commit" oneself, but, at any rate, to consider the whole of the community in all its aspects as the object and subject of literature.

The intellectual and the writer are distinct from one another in America. However, a writer in France is also an intellectual. In America the writer is often a rough-and-ready sort of man, without technique, who says what he has to say and then disappears after saying it, whose statement does not constitute a reflective cultural phenomenon, but rather a kind of lyrical explosion. This is the case of Faulkner, Caldwell, etc. The American intellectual is, on the other hand, more the university type; he produces nothing, he does not care for his own country's writers, finding their brutal power objectionable. He turns toward Europe—though scorning it—because he misses a certain type of European civilization. He seeks aestheticism, the hallmark of intellectual superiority, largely because he is not given a real role in American civilization.

In France this division between writer, intellectual, and community does not exist. As a result of chance and our good luck, the writer, and even the artist, have social and political influence. They have always had it, and, if we manage to preserve culture in France, they always will. In America, if one is not an expert, the things one says do not have a ponderable value in the political or social realm. One may create a great stir with a work of political economy or with a well documented work on sexuality like the Kinsey Report, but a novel or play is never a social event.

Thus, if France allows itself to be influenced by the whole of American culture, a living and liveable situation *there* will come *here* and completely shatter our cultural traditions and create a certain relation between the intellectual and the writer that will have no meaning for us. The fact that American intellectuals are not productive has not much importance since, in American society, writers generally do not come from the intellectual classes. But among us, where the intellectual and the writer are one and the same, if the American influence accustoms the writer to the idea of aestheticism and of being socially impotent, we shall be engulfed in scholasticism.

There is, in particular, an American virus that might very quickly contaminate us, namely, the pessimism of the intellectual. In the early pages of his remarkable book on the Negro in America, Myrdal stresses a fact that seemed to him quite general and which I regard as one of the characteristics of the American intellectual. In the midst of the optimism which is called Americanism are to be found a certain number of intellectuals (professors, etc.) who believe that no change can be achieved by them and who consider themselves as being utterly without power. It is obvious that if this mixture of *optimism* (which consists in saying, "Let's not talk about oppression; let's not think about it and it will disappear; there's no evil in the depths of the human heart") and *pessimism* (which consists in saying, "The country is too big; at any rate, intellectual influence is too weak to change anything") is introduced into France, it can bring about only one result: the shattering of the framework of French culture.

CAN French culture be defended *per se?* To this I answer simply, "No." France, left to its own resources, has no other solution, on the bourgeois level, than to turn to America, to ask for its help and consequently to adopt its ideology. On the other hand, it has no other solution, on the socialist level, than to turn to the ideology coming to us from the Eastern countries and likewise to lose our own culture. And anyone who, like Jules Lemaître in 1899 and 1900, wants to preserve French culture intact within a conservative framework for which he contemplates only a few structural reforms—chiefly a slight industrial progress, thanks to help from America—can rest assured that, by this very attitude, he will destroy French culture.

Do we have any other means for saving the essential elements of this culture? Yes. But on condition that we take up the problem in an entirely different way and realize that today it is no longer a question of a French culture, any more than of a Netherlands or Swiss or German culture. If we want French culture to survive, it must be integrated in the framework of a great European culture. All European countries are in a common situation. The same problems and the same dangers are to be found in Italy, France, Benelux, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Greece, and Austria.

The same economic problem, first of all: that is, the necessity of re-equipping their economies and the impossibility of applying for aid elsewhere than America. People everywhere in Europe have lived through the same catastrophe, which has left behind it the same landscape. Rotterdam was profoundly different from Florence but, right now, whether you walk about in the neighborhood of the Uffizi or in Rotterdam or in Le Havre, you are always in that same landscape. And even if you live in cities that were spared, the presence of those ruined cities weighs upon and changes the landscape: we know that there is a mutilated city and that this mutilated city is European.

At the same time, the catastrophe that caused this landscape to spring up all about us has confirmed us in the tragic idea of evil and the struggle against evil, has confirmed us in the idea that optimism is not possible or rather that optimism is possible only within a framework in which evil is assumed. While we were learning from the Occupation, from tortures, from all that occurred during four years, that for certain men it was possible to resist to the extreme limit, to the point of death, we were also learning that there are situations with no other solution than death. And not necessarily a heroic death, but simply death.

There is no doubt that in recent years most Europeans were forced to live—and in many cases still live—a morality of extreme situations, a morality in which one asks oneself how man will behave in the face of torture, famine, and death, situations that, thirty years ago, seemed like abstract problems which a philosophy professor, who had never actually experienced them, might set before his students. "Would you speak under torture?" was an academic question. In a morality of extreme situations, man either achieves the maximum of human resistance and freedom or, on the other hand, if he yields, suddenly falls into the most despicable of situations.

This morality does not seem to me to be necessarily the best or the only one. There are moralities of average situations; they are called casuistries. Today we have both our Jansenists and our Jesuits; and if, as Jean Bloch-Michel has written, we have to beware of the man we become in "great circumstances," the fact remains nonetheless that the prevailing morality in contemporary Europe is not the optimistic and Jesuitic morality of the Americans, but a Jansenistic morality of great circumstances.

IN ALL realms, the political, the social, the economic, and even the metaphysical, the European of today is faced with the same situation. Circumstances, the past, and the immediate future confront him with the same problems, with the result that a French student, for example, is much closer to a student from Berlin than to a student from Boston or Princeton.

We discover here a very remarkable mutual European understanding. Before the war, when you traveled, you met extremely polite and courteous people who tried to enter into your ideas as you did into theirs, but very often there was no immediate rapport. National problems were different, intellectual interests were different, the culture was different. Today you meet Swedes, Netherlanders, and Greeks; there is immediate contact. Whether it be the war, the American novel, or the latest book, you immediately have a subject, and you speak, not the same tongue, but the same language.

And most of the cultural works which have charmed present-day Europe are works that any European writer might have written. Plivier's *Stalingrad,* written by a German, is evidently the book of the Nazi defeat, though it reminds Frenchmen of the defeat of 1940. *The Days of Our Death,* by the Frenchman David Rousset, is the book of the concentration camps; the Germans can read this book. In the books of the Italian Carlo Levi, we find the same preoccupations as among us. Thus we have clearly before us the elements of a European culture. It does not yet exist, but we possess the basic ingredients because the same problems face everybody.

This cultural unity cannot be established without a political context. Of course we can ask governments, organizations, and individuals to inaugurate cultural relations; we can multiply exchanges, translations, and meetings; we can launch international journals. That was all tried before the war of 1939. Today these undertakings, which do have a certain interest, would be ineffective because we would then have a superstructure, a cultural unity, that would not correspond to any unity in the economic and political substructure. A unity of culture will have no meaning and will be nothing but words if it does not place itself within the frame of a much deeper effort to achieve the economic and political unity of Europe. This cultural unity can exist only if it is one of the elements of a politics that seeks to defend not only the cultural independence of Europe against America and against the USSR, but also its own political and economic unity, so that Europe may stand as a whole and single force between the two blocs —not as a third bloc but as an autonomous force.

The cultural problem today is only one aspect of a much greater problem, the entire fate of Europe. And if one thinks that no action is possible between the two blocs, if one thinks that a Europe divided between two zones of influence must be a battlefield, then European culture is surely lost.

If anyone supposes that European culture will be saved by a kind of monasticism whereby writers in convents go on talking about birds while fighting goes on around them, it is already lost, and forever. If, on the other hand, we assume that there is a possibility of setting up a unified, socialist European society in which economic problems are solved on a European and not on a national scale, and if this Europe tries to regain its autonomy vis à vis the United States and the USSR instead of being batted back and forth between them, then perhaps it may be saved. In other words, since culture is only one element in the total fact of history, we are dealing with a total problem, which presupposes and requires a total solution.

UNBIBLICAL HISTORY

CHESTER KALLMAN

Wandering jew, what comfort now?
After the horde of walking years, the climb
Was doubly difficult. Who minded it
For finally the shiftless view of home,
That hovering before you long had cut
The desert as a smoky track?
There then it was, no larger, no,
Nor greener than a pea; hardly a spot
Where oceans could be hugged apart,
Rocks might explode to water, law
And manna might descend.
It was what it was. You turned your back.
"Illusionless at last" you said and swore
Never to trust the angels when they came
Flower-like, flame-like to your lonely bed
Again, but to question them with wine instead;
And longingly stretched out your hand
To the familiar exiled sand,
The wide unpromised land
Where miracles might anyway occur.

Chester Kallman has contributed poetry to *Partisan Review, Harper's Bazaar,* and other magazines. He was born in Brooklyn in 1921 and attended Brooklyn College and the University of Michigan. Mr. Kallman is at present living in Italy and has recently collaborated with W. H. Auden on the libretto of an opera by Stravinsky to be produced in London.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WEIZMANN'S ZIONISM

The Road from Motol to Jerusalem

SOLOMON F. BLOOM

CHAIM WEIZMANN has attained the distinction of an elder statesman of the world. Along with Winston Churchill, who is one year younger, Weizmann belongs to the handful of leaders whose careers reach back to the great war of 1914-18 and beyond it to an age which now seems distant and strange to the point of unreality. He has become the unique symbol, both official and popular, and for Gentile as well as for Jew, of the political rebirth of an ancient people, the head of a veritable phoenix. Not only is Chaim Weizmann the first president of the first Jewish state in nearly two thousand years, but he holds that position quite inevitably. The choice of anyone else would have been almost unnatural.

The publication of the autobiography of such a man is an important event; doubly so in this case, since Weizmann has written very little before, although he has spoken much on the public platform and in private conference. But it is difficult to spell out Weizmann in *Trial and Error*. For the book is not a spiritual autobiography in the manner of St. Augustine, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, or even our own contemporary Bernard Berenson, who wrote their lives as "confessions." Nor is *Trial and Error* the traditional "life and letters" that illumines the past and every actor in it by a sheer mass of recorded conversations, "minutes," memoranda, and exchanges of correspondence. From the dullest of such biographies we learn much, and from the longest-winded of them the most. They are of the stuff of history.

Weizmann's book lacks the quality, and quantity, of revelation. His most palpable aims, his most immediate environment, his laboratory, his statements and proposals and negotiations, his official achievements, are all in it. But he satisfies our appetite less than he whets it, especially our appetite for information about those maneuvers, those conflicts and attritions of strategy and tactics, that have been so largely at the center of his striving.

Trial and Error then is neither a stocktaking of oneself nor a detailed contribution to the record. One can hardly blame Weizmann for this—he is but following the examples of his contemporaries, who have taken to treating autobiography as a looser sort of history: "This is what we have done," they seem to say, "and these are the interesting things that have happened while we were around, not what we have been or have tried to become."

Still more unhappily, Weizmann does himself considerably less than justice. His personal magnetism and charm, his wit and satire, his discrete quality of dreaminess and poetic evocation, the irony and mimicry of his characterizations of foe and friend, the high humor that transcends partisanship and self-consciousness—these have become an oral tradition and legend. But they appear at best in personal conversation, in intimate groups and occasionally on the platform; in this book they are reflected but inadequately. We cannot, accordingly, judge him by the style and manner of *Trial and Error*. For all that he has written an interest-

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CHAIM WEIZMANN's autobiography, *Trial and Error,* published after its writer had become the first president of Israel and at a time when Zionism had closed a most important phase of its history, offers the opportunity to view in historical perspective the movement and its philosophy, in the interpretation and emphasis given it by its most distinguished living leader and spokesman. SOLOMON F. BLOOM, associate professor of history at Brooklyn College, here attempts to crystallize out and appraise the basic beliefs and assumptions at the heart of Weizmann's Zionism, as they seem revealed in his own account of his inner convictions and career. Professor Bloom is the author of *The World of Nations,* and has written numerous articles for COMMENTARY and other publications. He is now at work on an interpretative history of Europe and the United States in the last two centuries.

ing and even an absorbing book, Weizmann is no writer. Style is the man only if the man is a craftsman.

The upshot of the matter is that *Trial and Error* is only indirectly and tangentially a book about Chaim Weizmann. He appears in it as the doer, the scientist and the statesman—and one of those statesmen whose unusual fortune it has been to conceive and create states, in his case, alas, a state for others to govern and command. He represents himself as the kind of man to whom his work is his very life. In truth, there isn't much that he has to say about himself in the nearly five hundred pages of his book that isn't also, in fact primarily, about Zionism, at any rate his brand of Zionism.

Trial and Error is in large measure the biography—I was about to say the autobiography—of Zionism according to the gospel of Chaim Weizmann. Therein lies its significance, particularly for Western and American Jews, who in the last few years have, in a burst of devotion and dedication, rushed to the support of what amounts to the uprising of European Jewry against an attempt first to put it out of existence, and then to delay the granting of refuge to the handful who survived. Under the circumstances, it was altogether natural and fitting that Jews, and not a few non-Jews, outside the benighted continent should have supported Weizmann's Zionist proposal without stopping, for the moment, to consider the wider meaning of his Zionism as an ideology and view of life, of history, and of Judaism. They have become, many of them, if one may say so, "ists" without the "ism." The time has come to begin to look at the "ism" itself and Weizmann's book provides the occasion.

AN ABSOLUTE and utter commitment to the Jewry of the Pale of Settlement of old Russia is at the root of Weizmann's life and philosophy. Weizmann has the sense of "belonging," the want of which haunts the emancipated Jew and even more the assimilated Jew in his new home. Most of us are in between. A conscious loyalty, a deliberate partisanship in the recent catastrophe, a feeling of historical coherence, these have grown stronger rather than weaker lately. But there are doubts and searchings as to the character of Jewish culture, the role of the Jew, the validity of nationalism, the viability of religion, as to nearly everything. If we are caught offguard, there is some absent-mindedness regarding our true spiritual origins: we are a spontaneous generation. In Weizmann there is no doubt and the generation of Weizmann is defined forever. Nothing in *Trial and Error* is as warm as the evocation of the land of his childhood. It is the fond return of the nostalgic exile. The "half-townlet, half-village" of Motol, the large family, the lifelong family retainer and tyrant, the institutionalized mother, the *cheder* surrounded by deep mud in the summer and deeper snow in the winter, the alternation of traditional rabbi and enlightened rabbi, traditional uncle and enlightened uncle, the old and the new synagogues—that is the "typical Pale, typical countryside," the rock to which Weizmann is fixed.

At the age of eleven, he tells us, "I left the townlet of my birth and went out 'into the world'—that is, to Pinsk—to enter a Russian school; which was something not done until that time by any Motolite. From Motol to Pinsk was a matter of six Russian miles, or twenty-five English miles; but in terms of intellectual displacement the distance was astronomical." The first Motolite at large, first in Pinsk, then in Berlin, Geneva, Manchester, and points west, south, and north, spied out the land. Did he find, like Moses' spies, a land of milk and honey; or like Joshua's a harlot's house and fear in the hearts of the Earthmen? It was difficult for Weizmann to judge, for he had brought with him the twin to the sense of belonging to a small and isolated community—a sense of separation from the rest of mankind and the rest of the world, and even from the rest of the Jews.

This second sense was bred into him from the cradle. He tells us that his father's business kept him away from a growing family most of the time. But the phenomenon of separation was collective more than personal. The whole Pale of Settlement, he cries out, was a "prison house created by Czarist Russia for the largest part of its Jewish population. Throughout the centuries alternations of bitter oppression and comparative freedom —how comparative a free people would hardly understand—had deepened the consciousness of exile in these scattered communities." Tucked away in "one of the darkest and most forlorn corners" of the Pale, the prison cell of Motol belongs to another planet. "Communication with the outside world was precarious and intermittent. No railway, no metaled road, passed within twenty miles of us. There was no post office." Very occasionally a stale Hebrew newspaper arrived from the Earth. "To us, of course," reports Weizmann, "the news would be fresh. To tell the truth, we were not much interested in what was taking place in the world outside. It did not concern us particularly. If we were interested at all it was in the Hebrew presentation of the news."

"Chaiml" was a boy of seven when the notorious pogroms of 1881 broke out. "These had not reached us in Motol, but they had shaken the whole Jewish world to its foundations. I was a child, and I had lived in the separateness of the Jewish life of our townlet. Non-Jews were for me something peripheral."

Jew and peasant felt highly irrelevant to each other, and yet their activities were vitally intermingled. That was the paradox underlying the position of Eastern Jewry. In speaking of Weizmann's early environment, Maurice Samuel has observed that the "dramatic contrast between the land-rooted life of the Gentiles and the culture-rooted life of the Jews pointed the character of the Jewish position much more sharply than in the city." While the village Gentiles "prayed for rain for their own well-plowed fields, the Jews fantastically prayed for rain periods seasonable for semi-tropical Palestine." For the city Jew the deprivation of land-ownership was theoretical; "the country Jew saw his neighbors enjoying to the full a tacit intimacy with nature which was withheld from him. And while it was being withheld from him by discriminatory laws, he accentuated the separation by his dream-like preoccupation with the far-off soil of his origin."

Weizmann himself is perhaps closer to the ground when he emphasizes, though in rather conventional terms, the role of the Jew as agrarian middleman: ". . . the economic structure of this part of the country, and the history of its growth, did not encourage good relations between Jews and peasants. There were many great estates, usually owned by Poles. The Polish landowners had about them numbers of Jews, who acted as their factors, bought their timber, rented some of the land or leased the lakes for fishing. The Poles constituted a Junker class, though in my time their wings were already being clipped by the Russians. Inherently they were hostile to the Jews, but under the common Czarist oppression they assumed a kindlier attitude. The peasants, however, had no point of direct contact with the landed gentry; the Jews stood between the two classes. The Jews were therefore the only visible instrument of the exploiting nobility. Still, the exploitation did not produce the same disastrous effects as elsewhere, for this was a landed peasantry."

He might have added that the Jews were performing, though not alone and exclusively, the important functions of handicraft and exchange. These brought the Jews and the peasants, that is, the bulk of the population, into an intimate association, much more so than in the West. The elder Weizmann was a contractor who managed the cutting and transporting of timber down the Vistula to Danzig. There was between him and the "fifty or sixty men he employed seasonally —moujiks of Motol and the neighborhood— an excellent relationship, primitive but warm and patriarchal. Once or twice he was attacked by robbers, but they were beaten off by his workmen." In little Motol two hundred Jewish families lived in the closest proximity to twice their number of White Russians, and just across the lake there were villages for which Motol was metropolis.

Weizmann is therefore quite right in saying that the spiritual separation was more striking than the physical or economic. The Jews and the peasants, he points out, were "strangers to each other's ways of thought, to each other's dreams, religious festivals, and even languages." The separation became absolute when people were at their most relaxed! "On the Sabbath, and, still more, on the spring and autumn festivals," the non-Jewish world was "practically excluded from our consciousness." Even in the larger town of Pinsk nearby, where he received his secondary school training, young Weizmann had no personal contact whatever with Gentiles.

Throughout, Weizmann speaks of Gentiles as a species apart. There were no pogroms in Motol, but "we did not have to live in the midst of pogroms to experience their social effects, or to know that the Gentile world was poisoned. I knew little of Gentiles, but they became to me, from very early on, the symbols of the menacing forces against which I should have to butt with all my young strength in order to make my way in life. The acquisition of knowledge was not for us so much a normal process of education as the storing up of weapons in an arsenal by means of which we hoped later to be able to hold our own in a hostile world."

This sense of exclusion, and not the longing for Zion, became the major premise of Weizmannism. It is interesting to notice that the first mention of Zionism in *Trial and Error* occurs in juxtaposition to the division between the Jewish and peasant worlds: "We were separated from the peasants by a whole inner universe of memories and experiences. In my early childhood Zionist ideas and aspirations were already awake in Russian Jewry."

THUS bred, the sense of separation radiates and luxuriates. It reappears in the ineradicable distinction Weizmann draws between Eastern Jewry and Western Jewry, between Zionist and non-Zionist, and between Judaism and the rest of the world.

His reaction to the German Jewish community, the first that he saw upon leaving Russia at the age of eighteen, was instantaneous. The self-deprecatory, defensive attitude went against his grain. The religious atmosphere "lacked warmth and gaiety and color and intimacy." "It was stuffy, it was unreal, it had no folk background." The dismissal is sweeping. With invincible charm he reports that his "Pinsk Yiddish which, like most Russian Jews, I had taken to be next door to High German, turned out to be incomprehensible to the Germans—very much to my astonishment and resentment." The principal of a Jewish boarding school, where Weizmann taught and starved a while, "took his Judaism to mean that in all respects save that of a religious ritual he was as German, in culture, background, and personality, as any descendant of the Cerusci." He claimed his niche in the national world as "a German of the Mosaic persuasion."

Although Weizmann was no "Russian of the Mosaic persuasion," even that would have been better. It seemed to him already, then, that German anti-Semitism was "heavy, solid, bookish . . . far more deadly, in the long run, than the mob anti-Semitism of Russian city hooligans and the cynical exploitation of it practiced by Russian politicians and prelates." A kind of learned prejudice worked itself into the German "national consciousness. Even Dr. Barness [the principal] could not ignore the evidence of Jew-hatred about him. But he regarded it as the result of a slight misunderstanding. If some Germans were anti-Semitically inclined, it was because they did not know the sterling qualities of the Jews, as exemplified in Dr. Barness and his like. They had to be told—that was all. A little enlightenment, judiciously applied, and anti-Semitism would simply vanish." We hear an echo of Motol and Pinsk in the conclusion that the gap between Berlin Jewry and the Russian-Jewish colony was "almost unbridgeable."

It was a clash between extremes. It is therefore much more significant to notice that Weizmann's attitude toward other Western Jewries, while milder, was still uncompromising. "I might say," he remarks of his negotiations in England during the First World War, "that it was always easier to speak frankly to non-Jews than to Western Jews; there was less likelihood of being misunderstood." He does show a little generosity toward those non-Zionist who, like the late Louis Marshall and Felix M. Warburg, betrayed eventually a good deal of sympathy for the development of Palestine; but he cannot forbear to comment that Palestine had by then "ceased to be a matter for theoretical debate," and had become "a living reality" which it was "impossible to oppose." But also for intra-Zionist politics he uses the conception of East and West as polar and even antipodean. Theodor Herzl, Max Nordau, Louis D. Brandeis, were all Westerners, and between them and Weizmann, so he assures us again and again, lay the transcendent gulf between a merely "schematic" and a truly "organic" Zionism.

The fact is that Weizmann is not merely opposed to what he calls the West—he is not interested in it; and further, in a man of his temperament, the opposition is too intransigent to be purely theoretical. His judgment of these men has that deepest lack of sympathy which is characteristic of the incurious. Herzl is described as proposing a Jewish homeland without a Jewish culture; and he committed the final sin of accepting the substitute of "a remote, unknown African territory [Uganda] for the glory of the historic Jewish homeland." Herzl's contribution was great but, "apart from his personal example, that of form." Max Nordau's attitude toward Eastern European Jews is put down as patronizing, his conception of anti-Semitism as "different from ours," and his Zionism was grandiose but facile and unrealistic. He was "an ardent Zionist only during the sessions of the Congresses."

Louis D. Brandeis and his comrade Jacob de Haas were "political" and "practical" Zionists in turn, but evidently in the wrong turn. Weizmann assesses Brandeis as "upright and austere" but also doctrinaire: ". . . like Wilson, he was apt to evolve theories, based on the highest principles, from his inner consciousness, and then expect the facts to fit in with them." This is quite amusing, for Weizmann and Brandeis are both typical empirical men, much alike temperamentally.

Weizmann is too intense a politician to appreciate his opponents, whether they hail from East or West. In 1946 he was defeated by Ben Gurion and Abba Hillel Silver. It was characteristic of him to reflect that Zionism then stood at the "nadir" of its fortunes. Back in 1931 Nahum Sokolow had momentarily supplanted him in the presidency of the Zionist Organization. "When [the election] was finished," Weizmann writes, "and some tactless person applauded my so-called downfall, the feeling came over me that here and now the tablets of the law should be broken, though I had neither the strength nor the moral stature of the great lawgiver"!

DESPITE such aberrations of political passion, Weizmann's twin sense of commitment and separation has armored him well for the political struggle. He knew he was a Jew before he could explain why or how, and his statement of faith has a blunt and naive quality: "I was never anything but Jewish, I could not conceive that a Jew could be anything else. It was very strange for me to hear Mr. Jamal Husseini, speaking for the Arab side at Lake Success, declare that the Jews were not Jews at all; they were Khazars, or Tartars, or God knows what. I answered simply: 'I feel like a Jew and I have suffered like a Jew.'" There are, we hope, better scientific answers, but hardly any better political or psychological.

He feels thoroughly and inseparably at one with Eastern Jewish life as it is enshrined in his conception and memory. The late Rabbi Stephen S. Wise quoted him as saying quite characteristically: "When Herzl or Nordau blundered, the Ghetto forbore to reproach a once truant and now penitent son; but let me make the slightest mistake and the Ghetto rises with a single shout: 'Weizmann, *bist meshuga*—are you crazy?'"

To this sense of unquestioned commitment, Weizmann added a protean sense of the expedient. He is the greatest exponent of practical Zionism, which is of course undefinable, being a policy, and only by remote implication a philosophy. It is the policy of recognizing unpleasant facts, of respecting unsurmountable obstacles, of infinite adjustments and bargains, even at the cost of consistency—in short, the policy of keeping going in a certain direction even if the road ahead is not straight or even visible, and, if you have to stand still, of simulating motion by marking time loudly and demonstratively. Weizmann has been compromiser, trader, bargainer, even haggler. He is a very able bargainer, and everybody likes to do a lot of what he does well. Of course every virtue has its peculiar excess. You may begin to bargain about things, go on to bargain about ideas, and end up bargaining about bargains.

But Weizmann is in good company. He belongs to the tradition of George Savile, first Marquess of Halifax, the great "Trimmer" of the last Stuarts and the Glorious Revolution of 1688. It was his business, said Halifax, to keep the boat steady, while others tried to weigh it down on either side, and he called Nature and God to witness that he was doing their work. He cried out "that our climate is a Trimmer between that part of the world where men are roasted and the other where they are frozen; that our Church is a Trimmer between the frenzy of fanatic visions and the lethargic ignorance of Popish dreams; that our laws are Trimmers between the excesses of unbounded power and the extravagance of liberty not enough restrained; that true virtue hath ever been thought Trimmer, and to have its dwelling in the middle between two extremes; that even God Almighty Himself is divided between His two great attributes, His Mercy and His Justice. In such company, our Trimmer is not ashamed of his name. . . ."

Nor need Weizmann be ashamed of the results of his practical Zionism. His maneuvers during the First World War, between British statesmanship and an Eastern Jewry hidden from view by two lines of trenches, were instinctual, agile, and sure. His perception, then and later, that Zionism must lean on the West was just as natural as it was valid, although it has led him too often to recommend Palestine as a client and outpost of the British Empire. His undoctrinaire approach yielded further returns. In 1924, in a "diplomatic" statement, he refused to declare himself on the form of the political community in Palestine. "Some people think [it] may be a state, some a commonwealth; and other people something else." And then follows a typical inconclusion: "But it will be a natural sequence of the efforts of the Jews." Equally cogent was Weizmann's early acceptance of partition. "I know," he said in 1939, when the proposal was first broached in the White Paper, "that God promised Palestine to the children of Israel, but I do not know what boundaries He set."

Such uncertainty is the surest sign of divine inspiration. Even the developments of the last several years, in which Weizmann's more adventurous opponents rather than himself have played the leading role, are, by a familiar historic irony, a justification of practical Zionism. For it was by an inordinate regard for brute realities, an overflowing respect for recalcitrances, an adjournment of consistency, and a preference for the logic of events and measures over the logic of their professed principles, in short by practical statesmanship in the spirit of Weizmannism, that his more ideologically rigorous critics have been able to achieve his veiled dream of a Jewish state and his ideal of a stronger position for further bargaining with a sharp world.

By all practical standards, therefore, Weizmann has been an able and effective and devoted leader, and were his public reputation based on his political achievements alone our account might well stop here. In a sense it does, for what follows concerns itself less with Weizmann as statesman than with the validity of the ideology which accompanies his policy, and with the public image of him. What is that image? Weizmann has not been in Eastern Europe much since his youth; he received his university training in Germany and Switzerland; he has spent half his life as a professor of chemistry in Manchester; and has achieved his greatest successes, notably the issue of the Balfour Declaration, through his close relations and contacts with British statesmen. He therefore appears as an Eastern Jew who, without the least tincture of assimilationism, is thoroughly at home in Western society and civilization, let alone in Western Judaism. Indeed the world, I think, sees Weizmann as the very embodiment of the synthesis of East and West, of tradition and modernity, of idealism and science. He is seer as well as statesman. He is the Jew as such, the universal Jew.

Does this need to be demonstrated? To Felix Frankfurter, for example, Weizmann represents the confluence of the "ethical and intellectual forces" of the Greek and the Hebraic traditions, "at once an East European Jew and a Western Zionist," and his view is not uncommon. "He is a Jew. He is *the* Jew," Ludwig Lewisohn has exclaimed.

Certainly Weizmann is an authentic Jew, by any standard. But he is not *the* Jew; perhaps there is none such. And he is neither the representative Eastern Jew, nor his blend with Western civilization. From the first he is estopped by being too much the partisan and politician, and from the second by being too empirical- and practical-minded.

By presuming an identity between Judaism and Zionism, and by setting off too distinctly and sharply Eastern Jewry from Western, Weizmann arrogates to himself a monopoly of representation. The only true Jew is the Zionist, the only true Zionist is the Weizmannian. It is not easy to discover, to begin with, precisely what his Judaism consists of, aside from being a factor in the vital equation, and the reasons are perhaps inherent in the *genre* to which Weizmann's autobiography belongs. We are brought up sharply now and then, for example, by such remarks as that Vladimir Jabotinsky exhibited "a certain queer and irrelevant knightliness, which was not at all Jewish." What depths do not possibly lurk here! Don Quixote is as typically Jewish as the business man around the corner: certainly we would read out of the fold too many Jews if we read out our excellent and foolish knights.

Weizmann's attitude toward Western Judaism—or Westernizing Jews—is more obvious, but, insofar as it is conscious and deliberate, it is governed too much by the early opposition of Western Jews, or their leaders, to Zionism. Yet his own family, back East in Motol, was divided on the issue. His mother would say neutrally: "Whatever happens, I shall be well off. If Shemuel [Chaim's revolutionary brother] is right, we shall all be happy in Russia; and if Chaim is right, then I shall go to live in Palestine." Chaim is entitled to his triumph (by the way, he never tells us what became of the revolutionary branch of the Weizmanns): "I will not undertake to say who was right, but she spent her last years very happily in Palestine—along with most of her family."

And, after all, since the great emigration of the 1880's, East and West have become somewhat confused with each other. There is now an Eastern-Jewish *American* community, and America is in the West in more than a physical sense. If the "territorialist" movement was originally led by the Western anti-Zionist Israel Zangwill, and even smiled upon for a moment by the Western Zionist Herzl, it is now led from New York by the Eastern, and Orthodox, ex-Commissar of Justice of the Soviet Union, I. N. Steinberg. George Plekhanov used to say that the members of the Jewish Socialist Bund of Russia were really "Zionists who were afraid of seasickness," but many of them found the stormier Atlantic passage quite endurable. The Bundists had other and better reasons for not accepting Zionism. No, Jewry in general and even the Pale were too kaleidoscopic to find their typical embodiment in anyone and least of all in a party-man. There were among the Jews socialists as well as Zionists, socialistic and religious as well as "practical" Zionists, internationalists as well as nationalists, and useless and wonderful *luftmenshen* and able intellectuals, as well as substantial burghers.

OF WESTERN ways Weizmann has learned much and quickly, as quickly and as much as a man can who never stops to examine his ends. For Weizmann has the shortcomings as well as the virtues of the "practical man" *par excellence,* that famous fugitive from reality. A practical man in doubt of his aim is a contradiction in terms. Sure of his ground, he only needs the information and details with which to persuade his woolier and less single-minded fellows. He likes to attack each problem as though it had no related problems, and to cut it down to manageable size, laboratory-fashion. But when it balks, nobody can be more mystical and romantic than your "practical man."

The Trimmer Halifax was more fortunate than the practical Weizmann, for his trimming was shored up and supplemented by the philosophy of John Locke, who was not too eager to square himself with the established and accepted facts. He thought it desirable, for example, to establish the doctrine of the consent of the governed by showing that governments originated in a social contract. But history reared up: only a few governments were ever so founded. Locke therefore dismissed history with a nod—"an argument from what has been to what should be of right [is] of no great force." In short, an intermittent rejection of the world as it is, is the beginning of wisdom. The difficulty with Weizmann is that he accepts the world as given, like inert matter in the laboratory, and conceives the problem to be what to do *with* it, and not what to do *about* it.

Consider what happens when a problem such as anti-Semitism is treated in the spirit of a rational chemistry: "The Aliens Bill in England [which placed difficulties in the path of immigrating Jews] and the movement which grew up around it were natural phenomena which might have been foreseen. They were a repetition of a phenomenon only too familiar in our history. *Whenever the quantity of Jews in any country reaches the saturation point, that country reacts against them.* [My italics—S.F.B.] In the early years of this century Whitechapel and the great industrial centers of England were in that sense [what sense?—S.F.B.] saturated. The fact that the actual number of Jews in England, and even their proportion to the total population, was smaller than in other countries was irrelevant; the determining factor in this matter is not the solubility of the Jews, but the solvent power of the country. England had reached the point where she could or would absorb so many Jews and no more. English Jews were prepared to be absorbed in larger numbers. The reaction against this cannot be looked upon as anti-Semitism in the ordinary or vulgar sense of that word; it is a universal social and economic concomitant of Jewish emigration, and we cannot shake it off."

How simple must be the problems with which a certain class of laboratory technician deals! A change in quantity, of Jews, leads to a change in quality, of anti-Semitism. The only thing that is left to be done is to determine scientifically the "saturation point" of each country. In the "Quantity Theory" of anti-Semitism, the spiritual remnant becomes a statistical left-over and for that Palestine must be available.

This is what comes from regarding the Gentile world as an undifferentiated mass in which Jews are a "foreign body." Weizmann, in short, accents anti-Semitism as an unanalyzable, brute fact. *"Herr Doktor,"* he exclaimed in his youth to his German Jewish school principal, "if a man has a piece of something in his eye, he doesn't want to know whether it's a piece of mud or a piece of gold. He just wants to get it out!" *"Herr Doktor* was speechless"—but he need not have been. Gold doesn't ordinarily get spattered in one's eye and the difference between mud and gold is quite interesting, and not least of all to a chemist.

In his attitude toward terror, does Weizmann represent a "Western" view, a "Jewish" view, or merely his own amalgam of strategy and tactics? When civilized people resort to systematic terror, "something is rotten in the state of Denmark." William Wordsworth gave expression to the classic attitude in his reaction to the September massacres during the French Revolution:

When a taunt
Was taken up by scoffers in their pride,
Saying, 'Behold the harvest that we reap
From popular government and equality,'
I clearly saw that neither these nor aught
Of wild belief engrafted on their name
By false philosophy had caused the woe,
But a terrific reservoir of guilt
And ignorance filled up from age to age,
That could no longer hold its loathsome charge
But burst and spread in deluge through the land.

The same view is mirrored in the brittle determinism of Karl Marx. When Russian terrorists assassinated Czar Alexander II in 1881, Marx, who was of course opposed to personal terror, wrote that "their *modus operandi* is a specifically Russian and historically inevitable method about which there is no more reason to moralize—for or against—than there is about the earthquake in Chios."

Weizmann adhered to this view and then faltered. He declared before the Palestine Royal Commission in 1936 that he had always "fought destructive tendencies in Jewry; but it is almost impossible to avoid destructive tendencies amongst the younger generation unless some hope is given . . . that one day, some day in the distant future, one in ten, one in five, one in twenty, will find a refuge somewhere. . . ." But, unlike Marx and the young Wordsworth, Weizmann is also a nationalist: he had to hang his head "in shame" at the "un-Jewish" excesses. He had never believed that "the Messiah would come to the sound of high explosives." (What an ironic commentary on his own work in explosives and Zionism during the First World War!) And then he summed up his attitude quite characteristically: "I have said that the terrorist groups in Palestine represented a grave danger to the whole future of the Jewish state. Actually their behavior has been next door to anarchy. The analogy which is usually drawn between these groups and what happened in Ireland or South Africa presents only a half truth. It leaves out of account that one fundamental fact with which the Jews have to reckon primarily; namely that they have many hostages all over the world. And although Palestine is the primary consideration, it must not, it has no right to, endanger the situation of Jews outside of Palestine. Apart from which it must be remembered that after all the building of Palestine will depend to a large extent on the good will of the Jews outside."

Does Weizmann speak here as the last and greatest of the *shtadlonim,* the intercessor with the English great? The English great understood him better than he them. The view of Arthur James Balfour, the conservative leader, that Zionism, being a traditionalist movement, would tend to strengthen conservatism in the world, was shrewder than Weizmann's ascription of the interest of English statesmen in Palestine to their religious convictions. He writes that ". . . men like Balfour, Churchill, Lloyd George, were deeply religious, and believed in the Bible. . . . To them the return of the Jewish people to Palestine was a reality, so that we Zionists represented to them a great tradition for which they had enormous respect." Can it be that Weizmann is naive? He was impressed, for example, by Lloyd George's familiarity with Biblical geographic names; but does he not know that the study and reading of the Bible is the greatest single source of English literature and education, secular and clerical, agnostic and believing? And was there ever a temperament less religious, in any sense you please, than "the little Welshman's"?

He blames powerful British Jews for "that ambiguity of phrasing in the Balfour Declaration which was to plague us for more than a quarter of a century." A "well-to-do, contented and self-satisfied minority, a tiny minority," rebelled against the prospective Declaration and "exerted itself with the utmost fury to prevent the act of restitution from being consummated. Itself in no need—or believing itself to be in no need—of the righting of the ancient historic wrong, this small minority struggled bitterly to deprive the vast majority of the benefits of a unique act of the world conscience; and it succeeded, if not in balking the act of justice, at least in vitiating some of its application."

It is quite natural for a Jewish politician to dispatch his wrath against his Jewish rivals rather than against his Gentile opponents. But is it entirely fair? A comparison with the accounts of David Lloyd George, Sir Mark Sykes, Sir Herbert Samuel, and others, does not completely clarify the responsibility for the precise wording of the Declaration. That Great Britain has imperial interests in Palestine cannot be denied, and such interests made her statesmen always chary of a too autonomous or too Jewish Palestine. It is well to bear in mind that the shrewdest and most cautious and hardest imperial heads were engaged upon this Declaration, upon this single sentence of promise: the utterly penetrating and unimpressionable and cold Balfour, for decades the rapier thrust of the British Parliament, who relaxed with abstruse problems in speculative philosophy; the calculating and percipient and open-pored Lloyd George, painfully sensitive to every personal and every political nuance—to mention but two of a magnificent team. They were Hobbes's Leviathan, flailing about the globe, impressed and swayed by no one, all the way from Weizmann to Lord Reading.

These were people who knew only too well the difference between promising—no, "viewing with favor," which is different again—and establishing Palestine as "the Jewish national home," let alone a state, and promising "a national home for the Jewish people" "*in* Palestine." Their homes were stuffed with dictionaries and their heads with surgical distinctions. All the scholastics and all the Talmudists never worried a poor word as relentlessly as they could. Old William of Occam's noun had a much better chance of escaping from the shadowy existence of an algebraical symbol than Balfour's Declaration had of confusing itself with a declaration of independence. There is, in Downing Street, a "Garden for the Raising of Blandiloquous Expressions for Dubious Phenomena," the famous "GRBEDP." Why does Weizmann think that, in the last century, these people have been detouring around the word *state,* preferring *commonwealth* and that supernal circumlocution, that gem which lights up the gray area between the dread words *empire* and *colony,* that buffer between colliding sovereignties—*dominion*? The "GRBEDP" is even now breeding a name that would describe a republic (India) that "recognizes" a king and is associated in a "Commonwealth" with other nations that bear allegiance to him. It is hard even for a Jew to be cleverer than such *goyim.* No, these people never slipped—when they said *a* home *in* Palestine they meant that, not a tittle more, and possibly two tittles less. Which is, of course, no news to Weizmann and to Eastern as well as Western Jews.

To condemn British imperialism is not necessarily to condemn the Zionist bargain with it. The road of the Jewish people met the road of the Empire, not to merge, but perhaps only to run parallel for a little while and then part and diverge. So we hope. And it is not to condemn a civilization in so many respects so admirable, and a country which is tackling more bravely and soberly than any other country in the world the principal tasks of our day. It is precisely my point that, whether in its good or bad aspects, Weizmann has not grasped the core of English civilization or of Western civilization as a whole.

THE intellectual self-imprisonment of Chaim Weizmann is not in harmony with the Western spirit. There is a strange unconcern in *Trial and Error* with a multitude of problems that are quite relevant to the Zionist, and certainly to modern man. The European experience is not assessed. The Jews, as it happens, have lived in Europe almost as long as they lived, in ancient times, in the Near East: they are, most of them, Europeans, not Asiatics or Orientals. Surely they are bringing to Palestine some things their ancestors did not take from there. Their contribution to Western civilization, of which Weizmann is proud, is not unrelated to their extraordinary position in European society. Of that very little is said in *Trial and Error*. Along with other Europeans, many of them migrated to the United States. A majority of the surviving Jews are now there, and most of them seem at present inclined to remain there. Of the problems of this community, which may also become a source of reciprocal inspiration with Palestine as well as the exchequer that it now is—and that it should continue to be as long as is necessary—Weizmann seems unaware, if we can judge him by *Trial and Error*.

Nor is this all. Modern Zionism arose with and indeed, on the whole, after many another European nationalism. The Irish were reviving Gaelic, the Czechs Czech, and the Ukrainians Ukrainian, when the Hebrew Renaissance blossomed. There is no discussion of these other movements, and no awareness of the meaning and function of nationalism as a whole, or of the possible, perhaps already impending, transformation of that portentous movement in the future. The Jews are an original people, but they are not as original as all that. Century after century, both Germans and Jews migrated to Central and Eastern Europe, settled in isolated communities amid alien populations, worshiped their gods amid antagonistic religions, and together fertilized commerce and industry in regions otherwise largely agrarian. Jews acted out with the Germans a historical play of which the denouement of Hitlerism was but the last act, the act that turned it into a horrible tragedy. Of this strange and curiously interlinked fate, no word here.

And what of the difficult role of the small nation and state in the modern world? Thomas Masaryk attempted an answer or two, and at any rate he recognized it as a searching question. It is really not enough for Weizmann to affirm his "deep conviction that God has always chosen small countries through which to convey His messages to humanity." Perhaps. Nothing is more clear than that the ways of the Lord are inscrutable. It was, I think, Thomas Caryle's conviction that when the Lord wants to do something especially great, he chooses the stupidest people to do it. He has sent some walloping statements through nations as large as France and the United States. Lately he has taken to dispatching messages through nations like the Germans—a warning of the meaning of totalitarianism—with the difference that the messengers seem for the first time to be unaware of the import of their own message!

THERE is, finally, a subtle and latent anti-intellectualism in *Trial and Error*. Quite justifiably, Weizmann inveighs against a certain vaporish learning. He brought with him "out of Russia a dread of the 'eternal student' type, the impractical idealist without roots in the worldly struggle, a figure only too familiar in the Jewish world of forty and fifty years ago." Later he concluded rather sweepingly that "just as the rich Jews never came to us until we were a 'practical' proposition, so these intellectually rich Jews thought that Palestine would be detrimental to their careers." They were too worldly, then. But Weizmann's attitude goes deeper. He remarks at one point that he has "little interest in affairs outside Zionism and chemistry." And what can we make of the cultural attitude expressed in this description of the learned *luftmensh:* "His field was the 'humanities,' the kind of material—history, philosophy, literature, 'things in general'—which one can take up, drop, take up again, vague and attractive subjects to which the bright type of 'eternal student' was usually drawn."

I am afraid that Weizmann has yielded to the conventional fantasy that so-called practical work is alone difficult, exacting, or productive. A new country may indeed need farmers, and carpenters, and chemists, but no one need deceive himself that intellectual work is not more enduring, more productive, and of course more difficult. Intellectuals turn to "productive" work as a relaxation and practical men are driven neurotic by intellectual work.

Weizmann's view of the world at large clearly lacks the cogency and vibrancy of his view of practical Zionist issues. His brand of Zionism, regarded as ideology, seems inadequate as an inspiration for the modern Jew who, whether in or outside Palestine, is searching for new answers to new problems. It is an ideology that understates the value of the European experience, overstresses the notion of "exile," and ignores the interesting dilemmas of non-Zionist Jews. It treats non-Jewish mankind too much as an opaque and undifferentiated object. The Lord created the world and its many nations long before he made the covenant with Abraham: ". . . walk thou before me, and be thou whole." If the Gentiles have chosen to ignore his covenant, let us not ignore his creation.

AFTER RECOGNITION

JACKSON MacLOW

With drooping wings the angels sit
Among the florid vegetation.
Some fiery swords half-hearted hold:
Hear: joyous angels wail in desolation!

The air is cold without, although
The garden, like a celebration,
Burns still brightly on, and gray
The light, despite the keen illumination

There, within.

O angels, weep, weep!
Till garden steam to swamp
And mists obscure the rays
That mock you as you pass,
Or sit, among the trees,
Plaining your distress
In tones unearthly sweet,
Unearthly desolate.

Jackson MacLow was born in Chicago in 1922. He has written poetry for *New Horizons, Accent, Retort,* the *Yale Poetry Review,* and other magazines. Mr. MacLow is at present living in New York City and has just completed a volume of verse, *The Sphinx in the Pyramid.*

GERMAN YOUTH IN A VACUUM

The Threat of a New Lost Generation

NORBERT MUHLEN

On the badly bombed campus of the University of Freiburg, the American Friends' Foreign Service Committee has built a barracks where students can read foreign magazines, take home English or German books from the circulating library, listen to free lectures—or just talk. Cynics suspect that the cookies and chocolate served to every visitor are the real attraction. But, then, perhaps the cookies and chocolate actually do more to "advertise America abroad" than books, speeches, and professional publicity; the students sense an atmosphere of unquestioning helpfulness to which, after initial distrust, they respond warmly.

It was in this Quaker barracks that I first met young Germans informally, most of them from twenty to twenty-five years of age. When they asked me about America I talked at some length about life, liberty, happiness, unhappiness, and hope in this country; and in the discussion that followed, they assured me with detached politeness that democracy was certainly a very fine way of life, perhaps the best. But, they added, it had little chance to succeed in present-day Germany. Immediately after the war the conversion of their country to democracy might have been accomplished . . . but now, the basis for democracy had been shaken, and perhaps destroyed, for a long time to come; this, they said, was the fault of occupation policies. With noticeably increased animation, they reported incidents—undoubtedly factual—of pettiness, rowdiness, and arrogance on the part of occupation personnel, and attacked Allied administrative actions.

Granting all this, why did this stop them, I asked, from themselves creating a free and decent society?—call it democracy or some other name. Was it not to their own interest to want a better government in which they could participate, no matter how foreign conquerors might have misbehaved? To this, a student answered that theirs was probably the old story of the little boy who, his father having refused to buy him a new pair of gloves, went out into the snowstorm without gloves on at all, saying: "It will serve my father quite right if my hands are frostbitten."

The other students laughed, agreed, and, considering this part of the discussion finished, quickly went on to questions nearer their hearts: What were the chances of emigrating to America? What examinations did a German graduate have to pass in the States before he could start working? How much money could he earn in this or that field?

On my way home, I was joined by one of these students, who said he wanted to talk to me. He had not spoken up before because he had not wanted to be shouted down by the others—the "model democrats," as he called them scornfully. "I never talk

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The future of Germany—that immense question mark in international politics—may depend on the present moods and currents of thought among the German youth who grew up under Hitler and find themselves today turned loose upon a world they are ill equipped to understand. Norbert Muhlen here reports on his rather extensive observation of German youth during a recent trip to Germany. Mr. Muhlen was born in Bavaria in 1910 and holds a doctorate in political science and economics from the University of Munich. As an active anti-Nazi, he was forced to leave Germany in 1933, and lived in Switzerland, the Saar, and France. Interned in France, he escaped during the Nazi occupation and came to this country in 1940. He has written for the *New Leader, Common Sense,* and various other publications. His latest contribution to Commentary was "The Shooting on the Moehlstrasse" (October 1949).

in public," he explained. "Neither do my friends. Most people think us indifferent, but we are only silent. And when we speak, we have nothing to say; we ask for answers that are never given."

He kept looking at me as if to make sure I was listening, and as if to decide whether he could trust me; he seemed to find it hard to speak. He was twenty-five years old; the son of a Prussian officers' family, he had joined the Nazi boys' organization at ten, and had later become a minor leader in the Hitler Youth, which at that time, though Hitler ruled already, was still a voluntary organization. His years in the Hitler Youth, he said, were the only happy ones in his life; there he had found *Kameradschaftsgeist,* a spirit of community among comrades.

When shortly before the war all German boys were compelled to join the Hitler Youth, he had planned to resign in protest, since he felt that true comradeship could not flourish among enforced members. But soon he was old enough for the army. When he returned from the war—wounded, promoted, and decorated—his world was a shambles. He had worked for two years in coal mines; now he was a freshman student of philosophy who supported himself by odd jobs.

After his return from the war, he told me, he began to feel that "much had been rotten in the Third Reich, and quite a lot was wrong with National Socialism." But he resented the tendency of many Germans and foreigners to call all Nazis, and sometimes even all Germans, criminals. He had been a Nazi but not a criminal; he repeated this as if driven by an obsession, although no one had accused him of being a criminal. He was, he said, a former Boy Scout and a former soldier whose country had happened to lose the war; while in both capacities he had been a faithful Nazi, neither had made him do anything criminal. Therefore he could never embrace a new political philosophy such as democracy: it would look as if he had deserted his old ideals and admitted that he was a repentant criminal. What had made Nazism so bad, he said, was that the leaders were liars, and the whole system based on lies. Yet the *Kameradschaftsgeist* among the Nazi youth was a thing he would always cherish—"There aren't many other values in the world, are there?"

He did not believe in God, he said in reply to my question. Nor did he believe in personal freedom: "It leads to chaos, which in turn leads to another Hitler." What did he think of the doctrine of superior races, and of Hitler's extermination of Jews? He had no strong opinion about it, he had never met a Jew except for two occupation officials, one mean, the other decent. "Hitler probably lied about the Jews, as he lied about almost everything." Did he believe in the sanctity of human life? "No," he answered, very decidedly, "no idea and no community is worth anything unless you are willing to give your life for it." Other men's lives, too? That wouldn't be necessary in a decent world, he said after some reflection; and then he suddenly and shyly declared: "I wish I could do something for a new, decent world."

IN THE first postwar years, many young Germans reacted to defeat and destruction with an attitude of romantic despair. "The essence of our time," said the young writer Werner Heist, "is the ruin." Even today, this attitude is still to be observed in many intellectuals. In Berlin's literary cabaret, "The Bathtub," young non-professionals entertain a crowded audience by reading from the diaries of Kafka; on the evening I was there, eight out of the ten original sketches given attacked the joy of life as an illusion and culminated in suicides. The audience applauded particularly one wordless scene in which for three minutes the increasingly desperate convulsions of the hero on the stage were syncopated with the merry giggling of two girls; when the giggling mounted to loud laughter, the hero stabbed himself to death. The audience was amused. In general, however, it may be said that these extreme attitudes are on the wane; most young Germans today have begun to face up to the need of making a life for themselves.

Hunger, which in the "zero" years had been almost everybody's daily experience, is now a memory, though a dread and traumatic one. But with the wide gulf remaining between "real" hunger and secure satiety, most Germans still live closer to the first than the second.

On almost every street corner there are now ice-cream parlors and wagons such as were unknown in Germany before the war, and young Germans buy cheap *Eiskrem* like American youngsters. To pay for this luxury, they play the football pool called "Toto," a very inexpensive lottery with state-run agencies in every neighborhood. Like Americans again, young Germans have a craze for all kinds of spectator sports, from soccer to such pseudo-sports as soap-box races and wrestling; they have also been caught by the enthusiasm for jitterbugging and boogie-woogie. As a rule, they seem considerably less interested in "sex" and its problems than young Americans; physical relationships between boy and girl are easily tied and usually just as easily untied, always remaining a very private affair. Young people rarely discuss their sexual experience, and when I told young audiences about Dr. Kinsey's study they could not quite understand its purpose. "Who's interested in whether ninety or ninety-three per cent of the boys sleep with their girl friends?" Even less could they understand the sex mores of young Americans as revealed in Dr. Kinsey's figures.

What the young German is mainly concerned with is his personal economic outlook. In the center of his mind is the fear that insecurity and hunger can come upon him again and the conviction that he can escape this danger only by individual skill and aggressiveness.

To PREPARE itself better against this danger, young Germany, like young America, "takes over the colleges."* The universities are more crowded than ever before; in Bavaria, for instance, where the number of young people rose by approximately thirty per cent between 1913 and 1947, university attendance rose by one hundred and thirty per cent. "Everybody hopes that just he himself will win the race," one publication warns, but a large fraction of the students can hardly expect to make even a bare living in the Germany of the foreseeable future. There are, for example, as many medical students in West Germany today as there are in the United States with a population three times as large; there are already twice as many doctors in West Germany as there were before the war—or three times as many as there are in England with a population approximately equal. The *akademisches Proletariat,* the college-graduated paupers, the unemployed and unemployable experts, were probably the most important single social force among those that carried Hitler to power. Today they threaten to be one of the largest social strata in the Germany of the future.

While the majority of the students still come from middle- and upper-class families, they lack the financial resources of the prewar generation; many young students have part-time menial jobs. In addition, they work harder at their studies than any previous generation of students; they want to own something they cannot lose as their parents lost their property, and professional knowledge seems to them such an indestructible capital, aside from its promise of good jobs and preferred social status. (But the very intensity with which the young German pursues his education will only add fuel to his frustration should it fail as an economic asset.) The tremendous surplus of women over men, which excludes many girls from the traditional career of housewife and mother, provides an additional incentive for girls to go to universities. Finally, young Germans must overcome the serious educational hiatus of the Nazi years.

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*This seems to be an international rather than a German or American trend. In the same summer in which Arnold W. Green's analysis of American youth, "Young America Takes Over the Colleges," appeared in COMMENTARY (June 1949), similar findings on Austrian, French, and Swiss youth were published independently of each other in periodicals of these countries. All stressed the disproportionately large number of very young people in the rush to higher education, their search for status as a motivating force, and the resulting deterioration of scholarship.

How serious this educational inferiority is, was indicated by the results of tests given in 1949 to candidates for admission to a newly opened school of journalism. Only ninety-one applicants out of seventeen hundred showed enough promise to be selected for the simple final examinations, and even these few proved astonishingly ill-informed. Many of these aspirants to journalism could not identify General Eisenhower, Richard Wagner, Albert Einstein; many thought the Allies had concluded a peace treaty with Germany in 1945; many could not say to which political parties the few outstanding politicians of contemporary Germany belonged.

German universities hold no entrance examinations. With many former professors dead or in exile, and the younger ones retarded by long isolation from foreign learning, and some still tainted by a Nazi past, the teaching level is below that of pre-Hitler times. And the spirit of the teaching tends towards that extreme specialization and positivism that began to prevail just before the Nazis set out to politicalize German youth. Partly in reaction to the Hitlerian abuse of science, which put a premium on political aims rather than truth, Max Weber's assertion of a science free of values and evaluations is again the officially accepted rule. Healthy as this can be in protecting science against political bias, it involves the danger of forming socially irresponsible experts whose narrow professionalism would keep them aloof from public affairs. We have seen how readily such experts capitulated to totalitarianism.

Courses in "civics" or, on a higher level, in political science, as they are taught in this country, might help to bridge the gap between civic and scientific responsibilities; but in Germany such subjects are regarded as "unscientific" and generally kept out of the curriculum; besides, there are too few qualified teachers in this field. And even if these obstacles were overcome, it is still doubtful that students would show much interest. To most of them, "political science" —a term much used by the Nazis—means propaganda, and they have had their fill of that.

This only reflects again the general lack of interest in political life prevalent among young Germans today. This attitude is to some degree a reaction to their experiences under Hitler, but its roots go further back into Germany's history.

For the past half century, Germany has had a class struggle all her own—the conflict between "German youth" and the rest of the nation. At the turn of the century, a German "youth movement" hoisted the flag of rebellion against the way of life pursued by the generation born under Bismarck. Unable to integrate themselves in a society they felt to be stagnating, young men closed their ranks as a "generation" in a sort of socio-aesthetic revolt against their elders. Like many revolutionary movements, the Youth Movement started with the battle-cry, "Return to Nature." Contemptuous of the *Spiesser*—the Babbits and the philistines—they went in for hiking and camping out and nature-worship. Their ideals and achievements, as a friendly historian summed them up, were "the romantic descent to the depth of the German soul, closeness to folk history and nature, the intention to be clear, true, and independent, often a revival of genuine religious feelings, and *Verinnerlichung,* a spiritual internalization fighting against the externalizing culture of the times." In short, the Youth Movement was a romantic escape from responsibility. For the Youth Movement attacked the citizen as such, as much as the bourgeois.

Under the Weimar Republic the Youth Movement degenerated into an institution for young people interested in romantic boy-scoutism and male homosexuality; its more vital elements left it to join the political movements of the day. Many joined the early Nazi and Communist parties, others teamed up with the less radical parties—

where, however, they remained separate groups with their own "youth" programs. The Young Conservatives, Young Socialists, Young Catholics, Young Democrats, and several other brands of Young Germans seemed often to have more in common with each other than with the parties to which they belonged. Unlike the Young Democrats and Young Republicans in this country, which function as training groups for politicians, the "young" German political activists formed a group of their own with their own special political interests. Inheriting their slogans from the old Youth Movement, they continued to blame their frustrations on the "older generation" and clamored for a vague, romantic "total renewal." Hitler promised such a "total renewal," and the Nazis did give young Germans a new interest in politics and the chance to participate in it; but it was at best a passive participation without free choice or creative criticism.

The historical role of German youth as a frustrated, rebellious group opposed to the "older generation" and disgusted with politics in general seems to have been suspended with the fall of Hitler. But nothing has replaced it. The situation is aptly summarized by Hans Zehrer, who before 1933, as leader of the "Tatkreis," had been the leading political spokesman of the German Youth Movement and its trailblazer to Nazism. Zehrer wrote in 1949: "There no longer exists a generation of the young in Germany. Today, there remain only single individuals who meet each other like atoms, are able to talk with and understand each other, but whose last word is the Single Individual." But in their atomization young Germans only share the attitude of the majority of the nation.

One of the current best-sellers in Germany is the war and postwar diaries of Ernst Juenger. In the years before Hitler this writer had prophesied, glorified, and idealized the coming totalitarian, militaristic, Godless, dehumanized Germany; but when that Germany came he loathed its vulgarity. With his irresponsible arrogance and occasionally brilliant but muddled thinking, eternally fixed in a state of intellectual adolescence, Juenger, now in his fifties, still reflects the attitudes current among German youth. He notes in his diaries: "Perhaps many people in Germany are undergoing my own experience: the knowledge of The Infamous [i.e., the Third Reich] produces a nausea towards all collective matters in general."

This attitude of nausea, or at least lethargy, seems more understandable and healthier (and, I think, more forgivable) among the very young; for them, who were born and grew up in a world whose values they believed in, the trauma of its total breakdown has completely devaluated public life and led to a defensive resistance against believing in anything new, for fear of a new betrayal.

THE "nausea towards collective matters in general" has stifled most interest in Nazism, be it favorable or unfavorable. The few books dealing with the Third Reich sell poorly; the only exceptions were Eugen Kogon's *Der SS-Staat,* which confronted the German public for the first time with the experiences of those who had been in the German concentration camps, and, in October 1948, Hjalmar Schacht's *Abrechnung mit Hitler,* whose flashy title promised inside revelations. Today Hitlerism seems to be remembered mostly under the category of pornography and scandal, to judge by the countless "true confessions" filling the popular weeklies, with titles such as "I Was Goebbels' Mistress," or "The True Love Life of Goering." The interest in Nazism reflected here has probably little or no political significance.

Chauvinism and militarism seem to be included in the political "nausea" of contemporary German youth. In the 1920's and early 1930's students and the young unemployed contributed a high proportion of the followers of nationalist movements; but the neo-nationalist and extreme rightist meetings that I observed the past fall were attended almost exclusively by middle-aged people, most of them over fifty. While I was in a popular Munich beer garden the band played an old military march; when they started to play a second one, a crowd of young people vehemently objected—not for political reasons, however, but because they wanted to dance. To one acquainted with the student theatricals and Munich beer gardens of twenty years ago, this seemed rather startling. But quite often I was told by young people: "We are fed up forever with obedience, marching, wars, and all that military bunk."

Nor does anti-Semitism, either, seem at present to have much meaning for young Germans. The small number of Jewish students and professors at the universities no longer meet overt manifestations of anti-Semitism. Those most pessimistic about Germany might say that this is *only* because Jews are few in number. I would suggest in addition, however, that the "Jewish question" and the anti-Semitic *Weltanschauung* find no room in the minds and the interests of the young generation because such ideas have so little pertinence to the problems of their own lives, and because even anti-Semitism as aggressive social action presupposes a social program and communal feeling that the young Germans of today lack.

Residues of anti-Semitic indoctrination under Hitler reappear when one hears, as I did several times, a Jewish DP or an occupation official with a Jewish name quickly identified as "the Jew." The stereotype of "the Jews," as taught in the Nazi demonology, today partly repressed from the conscious level, can easily be revived, just as can the other hostile stereotypes created by the Nazis like "democracy" and "the Church."

The "good sides" of the Nazis are not infrequently brought up by very young Germans—like the student quoted above. Quite a few other ex-Hitlerite youths with whom I talked retained fond memories of the *Kameradschaftsgeist*, the "true socialism," the "people's union," and the "community of work" of the Third Reich. This nostalgia is reinforced by a psychological censoring of the memory of the concentration camps and mass murders. There is almost no spontaneous discussion of these. When I brought them up, the young Germans professed—with a sincere matter-of-factness, as it seemed—to be "against them," and to reject the very idea of government by violence. But this rejection seems more conventional than emotional, without deep roots. The young people neither confess to a sense of guilt for the Nazi atrocities nor attempt to defend them: they regard them as "historical" occurrences without immediate meaning for their own lives, very much as Americans regard the wrongs done to the Indians on their own frontier a century ago.

Today, it can be said that extremely few conscious believers in Nazism as a doctrine and program are left among young Germans. When the Third Reich went down in defeat, exposing its own weaknesses, it "debunked" itself in the eyes of the young, who had been taught by the Nazis themselves to judge political forces in terms of power alone. But "a passion can be overcome only by a new passion," and nothing has come to replace Nazism.

WHY is it that, despite four years of "re-education," the young Germans have not been won to the spirit of democracy? I have noted how quick the young Germans themselves are to give reasons, some rather plausible, for their immunity to democracy. Yet under scrutiny these reasons break down rather easily to the "real reason" of which the others are mere rationalizations.

The main rationalization, as mentioned earlier, is to blame the occupying powers. The occupation troops came, as was proclaimed, "as conquerors, not as liberators," and the procedures of Military Government were hardly democratic. Either the conquerors were guilty of a double standard, or of hypocrisy, it was argued. Why, I was asked constantly, are we told that only the individual counts in a democracy, if the German people are held collectively guilty and collectively punishable? Why are the Germans singled out to be punished for the atrocities of their leaders while the democracies did not even protest against similar atrocities committed by the Russians, the Czechs, the Poles, etc.? Why are Germans blamed for collaborating with Hitler, when their accusers, Russian and English, themselves collaborated with him, and under less pressure? They well remember and gladly quote Winston Churchill's open letter to Hitler, published in 1938 by the London *Times:* "Were England to suffer a national disaster comparable to that of Germany in 1918, I should pray God to send us a man of your strength and will. . . . "

But this tendency to emphasize the weaknesses and failures of the democracies while ignoring their virtues points to a deeper stratum of the German mind: the Germans are disappointed by democracy because they wish to be. One German girl, formerly a minor leader in the Nazi Union of German Girls, said to me: "As to politics, I feel like a girl whose first love ended in unhappiness because the man turned out to be a scoundrel; after that she might prefer to be a spinster forever." The analogy, with its implied self-pity, is significant: we are aware that these "disappointments in love" often conceal an inner unwillingness to assume the responsibilities of a mature relationship. Another student said: "I liked your lecture because you are the first American who managed to speak for an hour without mentioning either democracy or dictatorship." I learned that this young man had been an active anti-Nazi under the Third Reich.

But the deepest reason behind these alibis and extenuations seems to lie in the German heritage, tradition, and experience. When Hitler fell, democracy appeared to the young Germans as something strange, unknown, unseen; and one needs a religious experience to believe in the reality of the unknown and unseen. But even if such a religious experience had been possible, it would have been a very inappropriate and useless introduction to democracy. As things were, democracy was first almost accepted, and then rejected, both in terms of images and attitudes shaped by the *Fuehrerstaat.*

When, as they tell it now, the young Germans were willing to accept democracy after the war, it was in the spirit of waiting passively for it to reveal its wonders, which were to outdo the promises of the bankrupt Nazi system. Democracy would feed, clothe, and house them, run the country better and make the people happier than Hitlerism had ever done; and in addition it would present them, out of its cornucopia, with personal freedom in the shape of longed-for privacy. Accepting democracy passively like the totalitarian subjects they were, they expected to *receive* from it what had been missing from their lives. (Some spokesmen of democracy may have carelessly promised this, too.) They were accustomed to a pattern of public life in which the government *gave* things to the individual; he in turn either approved of the government totally, or he grumbled against it in privacy without being willing or able to change it; or else he rejected it totally. The government was fate. After the war they were willing, as they put it, to "give democracy a chance." Since democracy demanded, as is the essence of itself, their critical participation and cooperation, not their passive consent, they had to be "disappointed." And they blame the occupying powers as they have blamed Hitler: it was not they who failed—someone has "failed them."

TODAY, if the young Germans pay any attention at all to their budding domestic democracy, it is to detest it as "dirty politics." The new parliament of Bonn is often referred to as a "chatterbox where politicos yell at each other in public and then make dirty deals in private." The virtues of free discussion, of constructive opposition, and of ensuing compromise are not at all understood. Compromise is simply regarded as treason, and the very fact of political activity as a kind of dishonor. There thus prevails in the minds of the Germans a fatal split between action and thought, between "dirty" politics and "true principle." A letter to a newspaper during last August's election campaign complained because the newspaper had interviewed the candidates for office on their stand on the housing question (the most urgent practical problem). Only a "corrupt" voter could be influenced by answers to such a question: what really mattered was the *Weltanschauung* of the candidate and his party, the letter declared. By maintaining this absurd dichotomy, which prevails in Germany today as it did before 1870, when paternalistic sovereigns ruled their states and peaceful subjects cared little for politics, the *Privatmann* keeps himself free from public responsibility and "above" politics. The sense of individual citizenship as we know it in England and the United States simply does not exist in Germany.

In the introduction to an anthology of German political poetry published in 1947, one reads: "To no other people in the world was there ever given less liberty than to the Germans; therefore, nowhere else have there been more poetical voices wishing for it than in Germany; only the unobtainable is desired always." And one of Germany's most popular songs apostrophizes freedom as a sweet angel high in the sky: "Wilt thou never descend to this troubled world?" The Germans still sing this song, and still ask this question. But it is not a question that democratic citizens ask. They themselves strive for their freedom.

But if the young Germans have made little progress in democratic "re-orientation," it must be said in extenuation that their postwar education was begun under the worst conditions possible. In the first postwar years, "education" consisted all too often of merely scolding the Germans about their guilt and exhorting them to be good children of democracy, like other peoples. The principle that one learns only by doing—a principle that applies to the learning of democracy as well as anything else—was little applied. So the appeals of their conquerors remained in the realm of idle talk rather than reality.

And it must be said also that many young Germans may not be so irretrievably lost to democracy as may appear. The experience of the Berlin crisis would seem to indicate that, given the right conditions, not a few of the young may after all be ready to transform themselves from "private men" into "political men"—or, what is better, to recognize the essential unity of the "private" and the "political."

In Berlin, young Germans—all under thirty-five and most under thirty—grouped themselves for political action around such leaders as Rainer Hildebrandt, thirty-four, a "part-Jewish" social scientist, or Annedore Leber, editor of a large Berlin daily. Neither of these two had been active in public life before 1945; both lost persons very close to them to Hitler's executioners—Mrs. Leber lost her husband, the Socialist Julius Leber; Dr. Hildebrandt, his friend and teacher, the conservative professor and poet Albrecht Haushofer; both these men had plotted against Hitler's life. Independently of each other, Dr. Hildebrandt and Mrs. Leber organized relief for German victims of Communism. This relief work soon branched out into active resistance to the Communists. Public meetings were held at which victims of the Nazis and victims of the Russians spoke side by side; an "underground railway" was organized for political refugees from Soviet-controlled territories; propaganda and literature were smuggled to the East.

As became evident in my talks with these leaders and their friends, one of the main stimuli for their activity has been a sense of guilt for the past—"We do not want to be guilty a second time of tolerating crimes against our neighbors"—and they have made the principle of non-violence essential to their political position. "No idea is worth the sacrifice of human lives," Dr. Hildebrandt told me. "In fighting violence we do not want to use violence." Hildebrandt's "Group to Fight Inhumanity" (*Kampfgruppe gegen Unmenschlichkeit*) has attracted an impressive following; Mrs. Leber, who after her husband's execution joined the Social Democratic party as well as the Catholic Church, appeals mainly to young women eager to participate in the responsibilities of public life.

Significantly, these two leaders and their followers rarely mention either "youth" or "democracy" when they talk about their programs. Their key-word is *Menschlichkeit*, humaneness, and they are in search of a system that embodies this principle. Even when discussing the advantages of a planned as against a competitive economy for the new Germany, they neglected the question of the efficiency of the two systems; they inquired rather as to which was more "humane." In other words, what we call "human rights" is a value they have discovered by suffering, and they try to make it central to their thought and activity. A second key-word for these young Germans trying to cope with their political future is "Europe." Disgusted with nationalism, they see a united Europe, or at least the "Western Union," as the greater new community into which they could integrate themselves with enthusiasm. For a visitor from America, the emotional intensity with which they talk about a united Europe is striking.

A STRONG religious feeling is not least among the elements that make up this new orientation. Although many young Germans distrust the churches—partly, perhaps, as a legacy of Nazi propaganda, and partly as a result of disappointment with church leadership in the postwar years—they are deeply concerned with religion. The figure of Gandhi is more meaningful to them than, say, that of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The *Studentengemeinden,* the religious students' communities of most universities, today count more members than any other student societies, a fact without precedent in German university life. One of the tasks chosen by these organizations has been the study of how to meet and defeat anti-Semitism on religious grounds. Another concern is with efforts to break down sectarian differences in order to arrive at a universal Christian faith.

Such ideas and tendencies as these—rather vague and romantic in political terms, and as yet not coordinated with the ideas and activities of the official political parties—are espoused by vigorous and practical young people and may perhaps represent the first genuine, "home-grown" steps on the way from lethargy to democracy. Halfway from their shattered childhood, silently searching for a future, the young Germans are not quite a lost generation, not yet. In the minds of the German youth, Hitler has left ruins as desolate as the ruins of Germany's cities. But ruins can be cleared up and rebuilt. Perhaps good still has the chance to win this generation.

MARQUAND'S VANISHING AMERICAN ARISTOCRACY

Good Manners and the Good Life

NATHAN GLICK

JOHN PHILLIPS MARQUAND is, alas, our most accomplished novelist of manners. Perhaps no other living writer has done so much with such a paucity of verbal resources. If Marquand's body of serious work, from *The Late George Apley* in 1937 to *Point of No Return* in 1949, stands rather creakily and ignominiously alongside of Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past,* it must still be confessed that it is the only contemporary American fiction which, in intimacy and scope, calls Proust to mind. Jean Stafford's *Boston Adventure,* although consciously modeled on Proust's style and structure, and although it apparently dealt with the same class that produced George Apley, was not convincing as a class portrait. Marquand has proved that, for the portrayal of this world, sensibility is less important than immersion.

There is also, of course, John O'Hara. Edmund Wilson referred to Proust in an early essay on O'Hara, and Lionel Trilling has remarked on O'Hara's precision in recording the nuances of social snobbery. But O'Hara sees social situations from a very special angle: that of the snubbed person who envies the snubber. In his best book, *Appointment in Samarra,* this masochism supports itself by overlooking whatever does not conform to its vision, and results in a study of provincial urban life which is more bitter and more biting than Marquand's but which fails where Marquand succeeds: in the re-creation of a way of life.

This is not to say that Marquand has been invariably successful as a writer, although his books have always sold handsomely. His success depends on a special responsiveness to time and locale. He is, next to Arthur Koestler, the most seismographic of contemporary writers. But where Koestler responds to cosmic political tremors, Marquand records the social and cultural flutters of everyday life. He has made of himself a reliable instrument, if not a reliable artist; but he is not equally at home in all cultural atmospheres. His New York and Washington settings—in *So Little Time* and *B. F.'s Daughter* and in smaller portions of other novels—have the transience of a tourist's or a reporter's view, and affect Marquand with their own nervous, fashionable modernity. The New York bank scenes in *Point of No Return* provide the single exception; but at a closer glance, it is clear that the Stuyvesant Bank is really a Bostonian institution in everything but its geography. It is Boston and Newburyport that are Marquand's native heaths, and his best work—*The Late George Apley* and *Point of No Return*—draws from the mixture of involvement and detachment they evoke in him. His satellite novels, *H. M. Pulham, Esquire* and *Wickford Point,* work the same backyards of Marquand's youth with less effect. *H. M. Pulham* is little more than a contemporary footnote to *The Late George Apley,* while *Wickford Point* is significant mainly for its lightly disguised portraits of Marquand's relatives ("Why, I'm Bella the Bitch!" *Life* reported

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A PROMINENT literary critic recently complained of the absence, in the American novel, of that subtle awareness of class, manners, and morals which plays so active a role in the heritage of English fiction. In John P. Marquand, NATHAN GLICK here points out, we find just such an awareness—though not, it would seem, in the grand tradition—and he tries to estimate Marquand's role as a recorder and critic of the mores and morals of our upper classes, old and new, in America's shifting society. Mr. Glick was born in New York in 1919 and studied at the City College of New York. He is at present with the magazine branch of the State Department and is working on a book on the contemporary film.

one of the originals as exclaiming) and its revealing literary confessional.

The sources of Marquand's strength are closest, perhaps, to those of his friend Sinclair Lewis. Both maintain a tension between irony and affection in their attitudes toward their characters and both build their portraits out of painstaking accumulations of detail. But most important, both epitomize in their tastes and in their rhythms of speech the very qualities of the lives they describe. Lewis's broad mimicry and Brueghellian profusion of vulgar objects offers a wonderful contrast to Marquand's bland, polite, measured phrases and his selected household antiques. Where Marquand is inscribing a belated elegy for a class already, or nearly, interred by history, Lewis is performing an autopsy on a live, burgeoning social body. Marquand's tone reflects the easy conversational style of inherited wealth, Lewis's the brash staccato stutter of the modern entrepreneur of recent vintage. Neither geographically nor culturally do Boston and Sauk Center meet, although in O'Hara's Pennsylvania cities we can observe them in an abrasive and compromising proximity.

The Pathos of the Upper Class

If the couple in T. S. Eliot's *Cocktail Party* represents the best the poet can say for middle-class life, then we may without apology offer George Apley to Eliot as an additional exhibit for his defense of aristocracy. Even in decay, Apley's class maintains the traditions of civilized behavior. Its members submit themselves to the influence of Harvard, of a few good novels, of art objects of a certain grace. It is culturally significant that the world of the late George Apley can still be reconstructed out of diaries, papers written for his club (if only annually), and letters of a Jamesian gentlemanliness and a pathos the more moving because it is so sublimely unaware of just how and why the world has passed the writer by.

George Apley emerges, despite Marquand's satirical intent, as a rather attractive figure, with a good deal more dignity and stamina than most contemporary fictional creations of any class. He does not belong, of course, to the great aristocratic tradition of a Churchill. He is quite a comedown even from his enterprising mercantile grandfather and his hard-headed industrialist father. But in an age which asks little of the spirit and is content with less, Apley is not without solid virtues.

A passionate writer could never cope with Apley; he could only rage at the absence of passion, the deliberate unthinking refusal to live in the senses or in the feelings. But Marquand, while he writes from an ironical height which comes close to being a point of despair, is sufficiently steeped in Apley's world to create it with a style that is its own image, its mild bare formal poetry. This is a world of the most modest pleasures, bird-watching and club meetings, of the most peculiar cultural gaps and lapses—yet of a generic aesthetic sense possessed, it would seem, by a whole class. It is a world which is absurd without ever departing seriously from good taste; in which Apley continues his collection of Chinese bronzes through boredom and distaste, with that persistence in the uninteresting which appears to be the major cultural talent of his class. Here wealth does not signify luxury; it is rather carried as a burden and a responsibility by men who make a fetish of discomfort, wearing starched collars and sitting in stiff chairs and refusing obstinately to cater to any spontaneous emotion.

"I have noticed," writes George Apley to his returning prodigal son, "that you are interested in certain social questions. Be sure to deal with these very lightly, if at all—better not at all. You must understand that the Berkeley Club and the Province Club are both havens of refuge where no one wishes to be emotionally disturbed." Troublesome subjects become "interesting topics for casual dinner-table conversation." The whole system of ritual in Boston Brahminism appears to be directed at deflecting emotional disturbances. Serenity is achieved through a resistance to change, through rites practiced scrupulously over years and generations. At this juncture, the decadent and the primitive meet, for if we want to locate a comparable set of inbred customs we have only to examine the anthropologists' Samoa or Bali. In Boston as in the South Sea Islands, ceremony wears down rough edges and by causing certain gestures to be repeated constantly, bestows grace upon them. Even the forms of daily expression take on an elegiac, timeless quality, expressed in Apley's complaint, "I don't know quite what will happen to us."

Marquand is not sure of his feelings toward Apley. The surface quality of the writing is dead-pan mockery: of Apley's obsessions and his occasional tries at literary criticism, of the Berkeley Club narrator's stilted and platitudinous and pretentiously ungrammatical style, of the ways in which self-interest dictates moral sentiments. But the satire is fundamentally gentle and we cannot be certain that Marquand does not share a number of Apley's sentiments . . . or that we do not ourselves. On the subject of progress, for example, Apley remarks (at an unusually felicitous moment) that "we have evolved a fine variety of flushing toilets, but not a very good world." Nor is he entirely unconvincing when he sees matters moving "too fast, far too fast." He was referring only to the subway connecting Boston with Cambridge and to the new dormitories at Harvard: he could not then envision the traffic of our big cities today, or the rooftop sprouts and the dank living-room roots of television.

In the end, Apley's tragedy is personal and universal, and beyond the range of the class terms in which it is expressed. It is true that Apley in his prime is no longer a free agent, that his immobility has been prepared for him by two generations of asceticism, accumulation of wealth, and repression of feeling. His life takes on its tragic aspect only because Apley is surreptitiously *aware* of the dead weight of tradition and respectability, and at rare moments of self-knowledge feels the impulse to break away. Twice he travels to Europe and each time Boston follows him. Once he was fascinated by an out-of-the-way road in a French village and wished, as he wrote a friend, "that I might be walking up it to see something by myself and for myself, without guidance and without advice. I wonder will I walk up any road alone?"

Looking back later at his timid encounters with alien manners, however, he accounts them a waste of time: "Your own sort are the best friends." He had never really ventured into that other world except as one pokes a toe in a cold pool, but in Apley's adjustable memory, he can pretend to have dived bravely in and found the water muddy. As he grows older and his concerns become more rigid and more trivial—he writes his son at great length about the appearance of mice in the blanket chest—he is driven to insist, "I try to keep my mind open to new ideas." Almost uncannily, his letters exemplify the familiar ritual pattern of cultural indoctrination, muffled revolt, submission, and petrifaction. Bewildered and pathetic under the placid surface of good manners, George Apley completes the ordained arc of self-destruction.

"A Good Horse and Well Trained"

H. M. Pulham, Esquire is George Apley projected into the next generation, and no more than Apley can he find a function to suit his wealth and class status or an existence that can release his instincts. Unlike Apley, but significantly like Marquand, Henry Pulham has been exposed to new styles of architecture, a change of heart. He indulges in a postwar rebellion from Boston, writing copy in a New York advertising agency and having (to his unceasing amazement) an affair with a modern, sexually liberated career woman. But he returns to Boston when blood and breeding summon—to brokerage and squash and a wife he never craved.

Pulham is too passive an object for his fate to engage us. His manner of life has been pre-determined by exposure to his mother's quietly hysterical prudishness, and cannot unbend, no matter in what cultural magnetic field he is placed. Possibly because he is too close and therefore too dangerous to his creator—Marquand was also graduated from Harvard in 1915, served as a lieutenant in the First World War, and wrote advertising copy in New York—Pulham develops into a comic puppet, the stooge who never catches the joke, the innocent who observes all the rules while before his very eyes his opponents exchange signals. Cast permanently in the role of victim, he is allowed only his Harry Langdon-ish charm and the virtue of being incapable of willfully harming anyone but himself. He most resembles, to borrow Howard Baker's gentle image, a well-intentioned horse who remains in his withered pasture "even though the fences are broken down and he can plainly see the grass is sweet outside. His devotion to fences makes him an interesting horse to observe. . . . But it is a good horse and well trained who will respect boundaries, fence or no fence, and there is much to be said in praise of Pulham."

At the time Henry Pulham took up investment counseling in a staid brokerage firm, John P. Marquand became a professional writer for the slick magazines, finishing every book and story he ever started and selling everything he wrote except one story ("It was supposed to be funny and wasn't"). Yet though Pulham stood fast in Boston while Marquand commuted from Newburyport, his home in northern Massachusetts, to New York, they were, on Marquand's own admission, not so very different. "I was a simple little boy in the lower echelons, naive about literature and the world in general, just a good boy trying to conform. I thought John Dos Passos was a terrible yellow belly for griping about the war." Marquand has identified his real hero as "the badgered American male—and that includes me—fighting for a little happiness and always being crushed by the problems of his environment." If this Chaplinesque vision seems a bit incongruous for such well-heeled characters, it too is part of Marquand's humanization of the upper classes, as well as a way of making their life real to a popular audience.

Like Pulham and Charles Gray (the hero of *Point of No Return*), Marquand appears to have had a destined rendezvous with the managerial wife, who takes over the New England parental function, making her husband toe the line and keep up the right contacts. Both his first and his present wife think the women in his novels—described by Marquand as "usually officious people who are rocking the boat and are worried about the butcher bill and the cat"—to be patterned after them. Of his first marriage to Christina Sedgwick, the niece of the *Atlantic Monthly* editor, he has petulantly remarked: "My wife had lived in a style to which I was not accustomed. We had to have a maid-of-all-work. Then we had a baby and we had to have a nurse. Then we had to have a car. And ever since then I've been over a barrel." They were divorced in 1935. Today Marquand is the possessor of a second wife, three cars, several homes, and a more than comfortable income.

It is not the habit of keeping one's nose to the grindstone that Marquand is really criticizing, but the refusal to accept one's actual role and to work at it diligently. "Given certain qualities, you've either got to take to the woods or get in there and play by the rules that are laid down. I think the happiest people are those who are doing something." His deadly treatment of the erratic and aristocratic Brills in *Wickford Point* is directed at their refusal to face facts and do something. Each of them complains that "nobody does anything"—and nobody does. Cousin Harry pursues endless elusive "contacts"; Cousin Sid speculates on the state of his stomach and the surface tension of coffee; Cousin Bella wants to be loved and admired because she is a Brill and the Brills are "interesting"; Cousin Mary, elbowed out of the limelight by Bella, has become mentally vagrant and ineffectual. Only their mother, Cousin Clothilde, is seen by the hero as an attractive human being despite the fact that she can never understand why they are always overdrawn at the bank or why anyone wants to leave Wickford Point to get some work done. This affectionate portrait of Clothilde would appear to be a function of some private charm in her original and of her membership in an older generation that Marquand has always treated more deferentially than his own.

The Business of Literature

That he should choose the Brills as his symbols of class decadence rather than the Apleys, the Pulhams, or even the Grays, is not surprising in the light of Marquand's attitude toward what he conceives to be intellectual pretensions. He does not mind the Apleys and the Pulhams living off inherited trust funds nearly so much as he does the Brills feeding their egos on the legacy of old John Brill, the Wickford Sage, who had written bad nature poetry and called Emerson by his middle name. Having started out himself as a business man of letters, writing to order for the *Saturday Evening Post* and observing all the rules, Marquand has felt impelled in *Wickford Point* to conduct a sniping campaign against the serious writer and in defense of the professional. This was obviously a difficult job for a writer who wanted more and more to be taken seriously himself. Marquand resorted to the strategy of making his slick-writer hero a craftsman at his profession, endowing the hero's literary agent with "creative understanding," and representing the serious intellectual as a thorough self-deceiving fraud both in his person and his writing.

There is a good deal of the philistine in Marquand's attitude toward literature, and Allen Southby, prating cosily of Joyce's symbolism and breathless about the great American novel he is in the process of writing, is a philistine stereotype of the artist. "Undue familiarity with other writers," Jim Calder, the slick writer, remarks smugly as he reads the awful opening chapter of Southby's novel, "is too apt to sap the courage and to destroy essential self-belief, through the realization of personal inadequacy. It encourages a care and a style that confuse the subject and the net result is nothing." This is the sort of pontification that Somerset Maugham carried off with a certain flair, but Marquand is too interested in avoiding "the realization of personal inadequacy" to take risks with language. His prose has the flat, polite, unexcitable rhythms of gentility and suburbia. It makes no demands on the tonal resources of the English language, restricting itself to a single low pitch, employing no uncommon words, no striking or poetic or original phrases.

As it turned out, however, Marquand's style proved perfectly suited—in its near banality, its stale cultural quality, its small sensibilities and larger obtuseness—to capture and document the devitalization of contemporary New England.

Insider and Outsider

The outward sign of this devitalization is the migration southward to New York City of Marquand's New England upper classmen. In the early books, Apley, Pulham, and Jim Calder all returned to the homes of their youth; New England still offered them, at the very least, the repose that they and Marquand prized so highly. The war years have hastened the disintegration of even that solace, and New York now attracts the refugees of *So Little Time, B. F.'s Daughter*, and *Point of No Return.* Fleeing the Bostonian aristocracy of breeding in which they see no future, they find themselves outsiders trying to enter New York's aristocracy of talent, where a snobbery of energy and popular success replaces the older one of background and manners. It is no longer a question of simply maintaining an achieved or inherited role but of fighting tooth and nail for survival.

Under the impetus of the war, Marquand investigated some of the classes and cultural levels he had up to then neglected. In *So Little Time,* he looked at the New York stage and Hollywood from the viewpoint of a script-doctor, and with the prick of his pen deflated a famous foreign correspondent. In *B.F.'s Daughter,* he saw New Deal professors and liberal commentators turning into "self-righteous complacent social snobs." In the short war novelette, *Repent in Haste,* he ventured into the lower middle class and found its existence grubby and sordid. Emerging from this underworld tour which confirmed him in the prejudices he had started out with, and thus proved inadvertently his own thesis about the determinism of early training, Marquand could say, with George Apley, "It is hard to escape the ties of youth."

It is interesting to note how the shrewd, stalking battle of Marquand's older generation to train their children for conformity resembles the conflict of generations in Orthodox Jewish families. "When people marry," observes a worried upper-class father in *Wickford Point*, "they should marry the same sort of person. They should not be excited about it, if you understand me. . . . Marriage is a damnably serious thing." The weak sputter of hysteria in Pulham's mother at the thought of her son leaving the fold has become, in *Point of No Return*, the artful use of headaches, heart attacks, and repressed hysteria on the part of the upper-class father to prevent his daughter from marrying outside her orbit. Here, in colder and politer form, is the classic reaction of the Orthodox Jewish parent on learning that his child intends to marry a Gentile. The intense scenes in which Lawrence Lovell, Jessica Lovell, and Charles Gray play out the double drama of a repressed incestuous relationship and young love made uneasy by subtle class gradations, call to mind scenes of old-fashioned Jewish melodrama. There similar triangles are acted out in grand blood-and-thunder style, instead of the subdued, doughface style of the New England aristocrat. A closer symbolism than Marquand probably intended exists in the fact that when John Gray talks to his son in an effort to create a more amicable relationship, he serves Jewish sacramental wine, "heavy and unpleasantly sweet."

There are, indeed, more common elements between New England Brahminism and East European Jewish Orthodoxy than suggest themselves at first sight: the emphasis on devotional activities (club work in one, prayer in the other) as the central business of the community; the careful organization of one's time so that a minimum remains available for the questioning of dogma or the evasion of ritual; the very early indoctrination of the young; the intensity of family feeling and the building of social life around the cohesive family unit; and the fact that both ways of life are disintegrating in the face of the atomization of modern urban life and the inroads of the classless ideal.

The Market for Manners

ONE important distinction must be made, however. The intention of the Jewish parent is to maintain a traditional spiritual and social community, while the New England upper-class parent hopes to maintain as well his exclusive material status. His children's manners, their knowledge of protocol, their schooling—all serve to keep their market value high, to make it possible for them to recognize members of their own class and marry among them. Their xenophobia develops normally out of careful and rigid training. When George Apley writes to his son in New York—"We have our Irish and you your Jews, and both of them are crosses to bear"—he is presumably indulging in a simple private rejection of alien peoples. But he is also, by that very fact, helping to assure his own class of an exclusive right to the sources of financial and political control.

It is Marquand's recognition of the changing market for manners and his sensitivity to their quality that sets him apart from all our other social novelists. Although the scope of his language is small, he is capable of using it with a wide range of inflections. The popularity of his books is directly related to this ability to catch out of the corner of his eye and with a candid and accurate ear the surface appearance and sound of class expressions. Marquand thus answers the need of a particular stage of social development where the selling of personality has become one of the major techniques of success. As social life today is increasingly disorganized and traditions vanish before our eyes, the novel and the film have become more and more important as guideposts for acceptable behavior. In the banking scenes of *Point of No Return*, for example, we have the subtlest text in our literature for the uses of deference and reserve. The concurrence of these scenes with the flashback re-creation of Charles Gray's home town of Clyde makes Marquand's most recent novel the best fictional source of cultural detail since the early works of Sinclair Lewis. ("I would hesitate to rank myself with Lewis; I don't think I have nearly the same stature. But I am working in his vineyard.")

Marquand's description of Clyde holds a special fascination when placed alongside the Yankee City studies of W. Lloyd Warner and his associates. Both are based on Marquand's native Newburyport and in *Point of No Return* there appears a sociologist who has done precisely the type of study of Clyde that Warner has of Newburyport. This report on the six classes of Clyde—the upper-upper, the lower-upper, the upper-middle, the lower-middle, the upper-lower, and the lower-lower—is, in the novel, entitled "Yankee Persepolis" and paraphrased maliciously from the Yankee City series volume *The Social Life of a Modern Community*. And Marquand incidentally builds up a devastating portrait of the new type of social anthropologist who "has the unselective curiosity that goes with a closed mind." The writer of fiction has no need to fear the compilers of "pedantries." Certainly, on his native grounds, Marquand is more than a match for any battery of sociologists.

But though he says it with great subtlety, Marquand says little more than the academic analysts of social status. Dr. Warner has recently offered his statistical technique for estimating class membership to the businessman eager for markers and the adult student concerned "to improve his position or make his present one more tolerable." Marquand seems not averse to offering a similar commodity to his own larger audience.

None of his heroes ever takes a deliberate step to abandon the race for status and money. In *Point of No Return,* Charles Gray, after fretting chronically that "most of his life had been spent polishing apples," has a momentary premonition that he is about to lose the bank's vice presidency and with it his future. He suddenly feels free: "A weight was lifted from him. There was no reason for him to try any longer . . . he would never have to be obsequious and careful again." But Marquand's universe depends on its youngish men never having to face the full consequences of such a possibility.

They may "mature" but they do not rebel. ("Mature people," Marquand has said, "are happier. At least they can rationalize the world in such a way that they are not going to beat their heads against a wall.") The vice presidency comes through two pages later, and Charles is already contemplating, at the close of the book, a larger house, a sailboat, and a membership card in the exclusive Hawthorn Hill Club.

In Marquand's view, this is about the best an average upper-class man can look forward to in our time. This novelist is no Henry Adams, sounding the return to a purer age, and no Henry James struggling for a truer sensibility. Rather, Marquand bridges the social gap between the original *Atlantic Monthly* and the *Saturday Evening Post,* outfitting the new middle classes, whose success values he accepts, with the rusty armor of the aristocracy.

WHAT HAPPENED TO ME IN MY CHILDHOOD

A Document of Modern History

EPHRAIM SHTENKLER

I FOUND this document by chance during a visit in December of 1949 to the children's village of Hadassim, on the main Tel Aviv-Haifa road, about an hour's run from Tel Aviv itself. The village was established by the Canadian Hadassah Federation of the Women's International Zionist Organization. My wife, who is chairman of the Palestine executive of the WIZO, asked me whether I would write something about the school for the press.

While being shown around the school, I was told by the headmistress, Mrs. Shapiro, of a boy now at the school who had had an extraordinary escape in Poland. He had remained alive only through having been hidden in a cupboard for five years by a Polish Gentile woman. This seemed to be something to write about; but the headmistress said that the boy himself—Ephraim—had already written about his "childhood" (he is only eleven years old now). I asked to see the record and, after looking through some old papers, she found a copybook on the outside of which, in straggling Hebrew letters, was written "What Happened to me in my Childhood—Ephraim Shtenkler." Inside was the diary, written partly in ink and partly in pencil. It was not easy to decipher. After I heard it read aloud, it seemed to me such an extraordinary document that I decided nothing I would write myself about the village could possibly be as important.

So I sat down and translated it into English, trying as far as possible to preserve the archaic Biblical Hebrew in which the diary is written. The Hebrew spelling was erratic and had been corrected, presumably, by one of the teachers. But I have not attempted to reproduce the spelling mistakes—EDWIN SAMUEL.

IN BIALISK my family was rich and we also had a shop and life was pleasant. But when the Germans came, they took away the shop and drove us from town to town, as they did the other Jews of the Diaspora, until we came to Zvirdje. And in Zvirdje, they took a part for slaughter and a part they kept alive. Although my father, my mother, and I were in the part that was kept alive, my aunt was in the part that was due to be taken to slaughter. But she was saved, as we had a German acquaintance and my father asked him to arrange for my aunt to be transferred to our part and he spoke with the officer and they transferred my aunt to the part where we ourselves were. And the part that was taken for slaughter died and the part that they kept alive was given places in which to live and my father began to work again and we earned our bread. After some months the Germans came and made a ghetto: then my mother fell ill with a serious illness.

One day we heard that the Germans were coming and we broke through the walls of the ghetto and some escaped. And my father heard that they had broken through the walls of the ghetto and he took me and gave me to a certain Polish woman and said to her, "After the war I'll come back and fetch my son." And the Germans came to our house and my mother lay in bed and they said to her, "Get up!" And she said "How can I get up? I haven't any strength left." And they killed her in her bed and the neighbors heard of this and told my father and my father told it to the Polish woman, and the Polish woman, when she sent me away, told it to me.

And, meanwhile, when my father went with me to the Polish woman, he was delayed among our neighbors and I went by

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EDWIN SAMUEL discovered and translated this remarkable document—remarkable whether or not it is literally true in every detail (having been written, after all, by a child). Mr. Samuel recently returned to his home in Israel after a stay in the United States as visiting professor in Middle East government and administration at Dropsie College. He is at present a director of the College of Public Administration in Israel.

myself to the Polish woman. I don't know what was said between my father and his friends, but the next day my father came and told me that they had killed my mother and murdered women and babies and that now the Germans were seizing those children that remained and were putting them into tarpaulin bags and putting them on the train in a closed wagon and there they were stifled. And my father said "It's good that my only son doesn't suffer as the other children suffer; but it's bad that all the Jews suffer; for why are the Jews to blame?" The Polish woman kept silent, but nevertheless she didn't like Jews and when my father had left she said "Damned Jew! When will you get out of here?" and she knelt before the Virgin Mary.

On the day after I was hidden in the cupboard my father came again. He didn't talk much. He only said "I'll come every day at noon," but those were the nicest words he spoke. And he really did come. Once he brought me a pocket knife and once he brought me a ball. And the Polish woman used to take all these things away from me and give them to her two daughters, one of whom was twelve and the other about sixteen. And my father used to come in silence every day.

One day my father didn't come and on that day the Polish woman wanted to send me away, for she said "The child's father doesn't give me any money, so I'll take him and hide him until he gets sick of it." And she put me under the bed. Suddenly we heard a voice, steps, and a ring at the door. The Polish woman was pleased and opened the door and saw there a friend of my father's and when she asked him, "Have you brought any news?" he said "I have," and she said "Speak," and he began to talk and said "That child of Shtenkler's, I don't know where he is." And when I heard my family name, I peeped out and saw the Polish woman's face was pale. So I understood that she was frightened, for she said "Is there anything else the matter?" as she wanted to change the subject. And he said, "There is," and her face paled and she said "Speak," and he said "Another damned Jew is dead." So she asked "Who?" And he said "Mr. Shtenkler." The Polish woman gaped. She didn't close her mouth: She only closed the door in the man's face and took me and flogged me with her husband's belt, saying "I'll drown you in the well this very day."

In the end she saw that the Germans weren't clearing out, so she was afraid that they might catch me and ask me where I'd been. She knew that then I'd say that it was she herself who had kept me and then they'd hang her and me. So she wanted me to break my heart so that I'd die and she could then tell the Germans that she had found me dead. But, to my luck, she didn't succeed, for I was then a mere child and couldn't understand what death was, so I wasn't afraid of it.

Weeks and months and years passed and nothing happened. And I lay either in the cupboard or under the bed. One day, the elder daughter of the Polish woman came in in a panic and entered with a rush and threw open the door and said "Mother!" And the Polish woman, who was cooking, asked "What's the matter?" "Mother! Mother!" shouted her daughter, "I saw a Hebrew mother and child who were walking hand in hand and a German told the child to let go of his mother's hand and get into the bag. The mother began to plead with him and the fine German shot at the two interlocked hands and took the child and put him in the bag and put him in a wagon and the mother. . . ." And the girl stopped speaking. And the mother said "Why don't you go on?" And she said, "I'm afraid that's what'll happen to you, Mother. In the name of the Virgin Mary and Jesus her son, won't they punish us?" And she continued by saying, "And the mother he stabbed." I was terrified. I was then already six years old and understood a good many things and thought that perhaps that's what they did to my mother and I became as white as chalk. After the elder daughter had gone to play outside I wanted to cry, for I envied her. It was already three to four years that I hadn't gone out of doors.

And so the years passed and nothing happened and I was already seven years old, but I didn't know how to walk. And one day, when the war was nearly over, the Polish woman invited in a certain Jew who used to make woolen things—stockings, trousers, sweaters and so on. She thought that he would make her many sweaters, so she invited him in. And when I heard that someone had come I peeped out and in so doing shifted the bottles in the cupboard. He asked "What's that?" I was terrified: I thought it was some German. And the Polish woman, who by this time really wanted to drown me in the well, said, "It's a mouse!" Then he heard the noise again and asked again and she replied "A mouse" until eventually I peered out and he saw me. Then he got furious with her and said, "Why, that's the son of my friend Mr. Shtenkler!" The Polish woman grew pale. And he took me to his house in the next street and asked me what I wanted to wear and I said "Clothes." He laughed and said "Good!" He took out some stockings and a few sweaters and went to the market. I waited for him in his house. Eventually he came with a parcel in his hand. He took off my rags and dressed me in the sort of clothes one wears in this world.

After a day the acquaintance decided to look for a doctor who would treat me so that I could walk. So we got on the train and went to Katowitz. But all of a sudden a man came and spoke to him. In accordance with what he said, I was taken in another train and, like an arrow from the bow, the train flew along, straight to a children's home. There they told him to wait a little. He waited patiently and in the end went into the office and telephoned and after a brief hour a doctor appeared, the one who actually did treat me.

Month after month passed until I learned to walk. It was hard for the doctor to treat me and for me to walk. After I knew how to walk not so badly, they took me to a place in the high mountains and taught me and some other children how to walk. The other children taunted me because I didn't know how to walk properly. I used to walk with crooked legs: my feet were twisted backwards. The children hit me and did what they liked with me. The teachers didn't protect me, so they taunted me.

So passed a whole month. One day they heard a ring on the telephone. This was a woman who had known my father. She wanted to take me away to her house; but this was not allowed as they were afraid that something might happen to my legs. Only after some time did they send me there. She was already waiting for me. She was pleased at my arrival—hale and well—and she took me to her house. There I spent some time. And on one occasion my father's best friend came and took me to *his* house and, later, he took me to a children's home. There I had a good time. Once, three acquaintances of my father's came and told me things and gave candy to the children who were in the room. They told me that I was already a big boy and that I couldn't stay any longer in this [children's] home. And the three men took me and put me in the [youth] movement* and I was there for a number of months. And the friend who was in the Polish Army thought of taking me away from there and took me for a day. And when he saw that there wasn't any other place, he went with me to one of the nearby places and said to me, "Go and tell the headmistress that I'll come back in the afternoon and talk with her." And I went and told her that, and the headmistress said "Get out of here!" and chased me away with insolence. So I went to the market. There I met my acquaintance and told him about it. And he said, "Well then, come now," and we went.

When we came she didn't want to receive him and didn't open the gate. So he told her that he'd put me into a rival [youth] movement. She screamed and shouted but nothing was of any use. For we had already got into a train; so we traveled along and came to the railway station. There we found a certain woman who was travelling to one of the places from which it was possible to go where I had to go. This was a children's village in

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*The reference here, and subsequently, is to the Jewish youth groups that are affiliated to various Jewish political parties.

Poland. The place was lovely. There were woods and hills nearby: on one hill was a cemetery. And the time passed pleasantly.

I was there a long time. There the children didn't tease me as they used to in the previous children's home. Now I already knew how to walk. One day they asked which were the orphan children. I was among those children. Everyone wanted to know why they asked us this. Eventually we learned that we were going to be the first to go to Palestine. We were extremely glad. The children danced and sang. The next day all us orphan children got into a car and we rode to the railway station. We traveled in two groups to one of the places in Poland. Here something strange happened. We waited all night and the car didn't turn up. Next day, every one was in a state of confusion. The day after that, they fetched the group that had traveled with us and told us to wait another couple of days. At the end of these two days a car came and fetched us. We traveled for many hours; and meanwhile I slept. Eventually we arrived. I heard shouts. There a small ship awaited us—I should rather say a large boat—and they put us all into it and we started off. And the boat rocked on the surface of the quiet waves. All of a sudden the boat heeled over to one side. All the things on the top fell off but by a miracle we were saved. There was a certain soldier there from the Russian Army. He knew what to do in moments like this. And the day passed and it grew darker, until night fell. We were sleeping and the soldier couldn't sleep and went up on top and suddenly he saw something shining in the water. He pulled out his revolver and took his torch and looked and saw and behold there were mines in an enormous line! In that instant he let out a yell. At the sound of that shout we all woke up. The pilot wanted to take the boat on a detour around Berlin and thus was about to run into the mines. But the man with his revolver in his hand leapt straight down into the engine room. He broke through the hatch and jumped on top of the pilot. The pilot started back and thought—bandits! He sat himself down in front of the soldier and steered the boat over many, many kilometers to Berlin.

We were unhappy. I and several other of the children had some disease. We had to be in the hospital. The remaining children went to a school, played and jumped for joy and we stayed all the time in hospital for many days. This continued, and after these sad days we left the hospital. At that time all the children had gone to school and when they came back we weren't allowed to go into their rooms: not only that, we were shut up in a special room. After three to four days we were allowed out with the other children. What a lot of games there were there! Endless! Many political parties too! There we used to go almost always to the movies. And during the performances, the Jews all used to cry. Even the grown-ups used to hide their faces in their coats.

It was clear that each youth movement hated the other. Occasionally a fight broke out with knives and sticks. They used to hand out terrible punishments there: for example, spending the whole night out on the balcony. After days of punishments and beatings for every little thing we left Berlin and came to a terrible place where every blow ended in a battle with knives and sticks as if they were gloves. In the end, when they saw that our movement was the quietest of the lot, they gave us a place that really took the prize for beauty—woods where there were terrible wild beasts. There each group was in its own house and they used to beat us for every stupid little attack on the other groups. The names of the groups were Trumpeldor, Nitzanim, Bar Kochba, Nishrim, Ariye. I was in the Trumpeldor group.

One fine day all us orphans set out for Palestine. They told us many tales then—endlessly. They woke us up at midnight and the car came in the morning. The car was like the chrysalis of a butterfly. Eventually we arrived at one of the camps. The next day we traveled and went on and on without end. But I remember that finally we came by train to France. I don't remember the journey. It was for three days and three nights. And from France we went on board a ship and on the ship no one suffered from seasickness. And when we came to Palestine we were obliged every one of us to hold on to all the bits of paper, even to the numbers of our rooms. One of our group was a boy—Isaiah Zelik—and he put all his papers on one of the benches, and if it hadn't been for one of our teachers, Moshe, he would have gone back to Germany.

How excited we were when at last we were assembled on parade and disembarked from the ship! And we came to Ahuza—the children's village on Mount Carmel and from there to the children's village at Hadassim. And after some time more children arrived.

ONE day I received a letter from one of the women in Canada:

Dear Ephraim,

I found your name in the Jewish Emigration Department and I want to know who you are. You bear the same family name as I do. Where do you come from and who were your parents? Write everything that you can remember and thus we can prove whether you are of my family. Do you remember the name of your grandfather? Write to me all you can remember. If you are one of my relatives, I will write to you about myself. Write quickly.

Yours, Sarah.

At that time, I was given a piece of paper and this was written on it:

Women's International Zionist Organization, Children's Village, Hadassim.
21st. January 1949

To the Director General of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
P.O.B. 640, Jerusalem
Subject: The Child Ephraim Shtenkler
Sir,

In reply to your letter No. 18871/40/1 of 22/12/18 we have to give you particulars of the above-mentioned child and of his family. The child's name is Ephraim Shtenkler, born in Bialisk. Father's name Jacob: mother's name Bilha. Only child. The child is ten and a half years old. He was in the hands of Poles in Zvirdje from the age of two to the age of seven. After the Russian occupation, a certain Jew came and took him and put him in a children's home. The name of his father and mother he learned from a friend of his father's in the Polish Army. These are the details known to the child. We shall be very grateful if you will be good enough to inform us if nevertheless any of the child's relatives are traced.

Yours faithfully
The Secretariat
The Children's Village.

About a month after that letter came, I found my uncle.* How delighted the whole village was!

But everyone tells the story differently. One says that my uncle came to me and inquired.

Once I told several of the children all this and it was they who suggested that I should write all this down.

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*The uncle mentioned here was a skilled building worker who had gone to many of the immigrant camps looking for Ephraim. By sheer coincidence, he had been engaged to do some repair work in the school and asked his usual question "Is there any boy here called Ephraim?" And so the two were rejoined.—E. S.

THE EXPATRIATE

A Story

JULIUS HORWITZ

THE first thing he did when he stepped off the hot grimy train was to go to the public washroom and clean up. Then, while waiting for his luggage to come up from the baggage car, he got on the phone and started calling his friends. It had been over a year since he had heard from any of them and he was anxious to know how they were making out. After all, he had grown up with them and they were still his closest friends. During the war they kept in constant touch with one another. One couldn't sit over a salami sandwich and a cup of hot tea and argue destiny, so one wrote letters. Letters that were forwarded from every part of the world, letters that were often retyped into a dozen carbons, and so reached the whole gang.

But now the war was over and nobody wrote letters any more. Letter-writing had died in the same imperceptible manner as their solemn wartime pledges to change the face of the earth. And now, instead, whenever he came into town, once, maybe twice a year, there was a general get-together. His friends chipped in for a couple of cases of beer, some whisky, port wine, invited their wives, girl friends, and spent the night spouting half-remembered college texts reimpressing themselves with their awful hate of the world. . . .

"Hello—is that you Irv?"

"Sol! What the hell are you doing in town?"

"I'm in for my sister's wedding."

"Good deal—listen—I'll get hold of everybody. We'll have a party tonight. At Pete's house. His place is open house now."

It was that simple. They were always ready for a party. What else was there to do in Detroit?

STRANGE, how all during the week he was making plans to leave New York, his friends had been constantly on his mind. Perhaps because this time he had been away longer and had heard less news. Often during the day and just before he fell asleep he would think about his trip and imagine how various of his friends would act. For the first time, he had the uneasy feeling, somehow, that he was returning to an alien world. He knew that he had made the *break*—that his friends still lived with their families and only Irv and Pete had married, and they too, despite their marriages, were still all tied up with their families. Last trip he had noticed how they were sinking into the emptiness of their home town. They felt it, too. Of course, Pete talked a different line. "This is where the real people live," Pete would say, "right here on our block. I wouldn't move for all the dough in the world. These are my people. Flesh and blood. Everything else is phoney. . . ." The others complained openly that Detroit was a desert. But they never tried to lift themselves out of the neighborhood life they were entangled in. . . .

Of course, the neighborhood wasn't a bad place to live in for the men who went forth daily on the morning tide to their tailor shops, dry-goods counters, grocery stores, factory benches, the big ugly dark industrial plants, airless offices—and on the ebb tide came home tired, ate, read the news that never seemed to affect them personally, talked a little to their wives, and then went to sleep in their nice roomy, detached houses on streets lined with trees. But for those who had wanted something better than this workaday round, who had considered themselves

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"THE EXPATRIATE" is the fourth of JULIUS HORWITZ's stories of urban Jewish life to appear in COMMENTARY. Mr. Horwitz was born in Cleveland in 1920; he now lives in New York, and writes radio scripts.

intellectuals of a sort, what kind of life was that for them?

Sol hurried out of the Union Station. The downtown section was just beginning to crowd up with people. He wondered what it would be like to get off the dismal streetcar coming from his neighborhood, take an elevator up to a business office, careful of his shoe shine, choice of tie, matching socks, his ideas, work eight hours, take the same elevator down, take the same dismal streetcar home, five days a week, forever, until he died. When he had come home from the army this was a hungry sight. But now—

The party began early that evening, and was already well under way when Sol walked in. There were a lot of unfamiliar faces, people holding glasses, people lined up neatly on the Regency sofa, against the sparsely filled bookcases. But he quickly picked out the faces he had known from grade-school days. Irv poured him a shot of whisky. Sol drank it straight and then took his time looking around the room, to get a sense of how he stood.

Pete asked, coming up to Sol, "Does everybody in New York wear those miserable-looking cotton cord suits? It looks like a street-cleaner's uniform to me." No hello. No handshake.

Sol had a feeling what was coming next.

"At what bargain counter did you pick up the suit?"

Sol knew that none of his Detroit friends wore cord suits. They disapproved of them—they were made of cotton, didn't keep a crease, weren't sharp—nuts—the whole thing was ridiculous! He had bought it at Macy's because it was a damn sensible outfit to wear for the hot New York summers. What kind of junk was this, being attacked for the suit he wore? Especially after he hadn't seen Pete in over a year.

"Who're you trying to fool, Sol!" Pete persisted. "You know you don't belong in a suit like that!"

They did! He didn't! They should be studying at Columbia, not him! They should be living in New York, not him!

"Look, you god-damn fool!" Sol sharply said to Pete. "If you can't talk to me straight like a *mensh* without making a lot of stupid remarks about the clothes I wear then you can go straight to hell!" Pete stopped short. He had expected Sol to acquiesce; it was a game they played.

Sol's outburst didn't go unnoticed. So Sol was on his high horse. There was a sense of battle lines being drawn.

The talk now became vague, nobody really said anything. Bernie stood in the corner with a stupid beery grin on his face saying, "I love my wife, I love my wife more than anything else in the world. My wife is my whole world to me. . . ." Sol wondered how drunk he really was. His wife was nothing extraordinary. A girl, what else?

Irv took Sol into the kitchen. Pete, Harry, Morrie, Dave sat down around the kitchen table. Irv tried to pin Sol down on what he had accomplished in New York, red ink, black ink. Sol felt himself slipping. He knew he was selling himself too hard. That was a mistake. Now was the time for him to be on guard. These people, his friends around the kitchen table, they no longer understood what was on his mind. Stupid to continue to talk about himself—to try to find among these faces an audience for his experiences, more important, his expectations....

"Tell me—how's New York? Making a lot of money?"

"Whatta you doing Sol, still living in the same old hole?"

"Why don't you get out of that crazy town?"

Question, answer. They weren't expressing their true feelings—perhaps they didn't understand themselves. But Sol felt he knew what the tribe was up to. This fellow Sol Katz, they were saying. This outsider!

The party broke up at two in the morning. Sol wasn't sorry about telling Pete to go to hell, but they had parted, on the surface, as friends. "We can't quarrel over a thing like a suit, you're my buddy, my friend," Pete told Sol when the party came to an end.

On Sol's last night in town his mother invited all of the relatives over to the house and there was a general get-together for his newly married sister. The dining-room table was piled high with every kind of delicacy, the kind that Sol could only afford on rare occasions when his money permitted a Delancey Street feast. As soon as the party began to die down, Sol drove over to Pete's house—one of his cousins dropped him off. Irv and his wife were over, Pete had told him over the phone, we can talk a little before you catch your train.

Sol felt glad he was going to see Irv again before he left. He and Irv had been friends ever since they were old enough to enter grade school. Of course, by now they had drifted apart, but they were still best friends. And to be a best friend has a very definite meaning. The highest relationship of your life. . . .

Pete, his wife, Irv and his wife, the four of them were playing rummy when Sol walked in. They didn't lay down their cards. Sol busied himself studying Irv's hand. He expected they would stop when the deal ran out. Instead, Pete picked up the cards and shuffled them, dealing out a new hand. Sol realized he had been looking forward to a kind of last-minute friendly confab. Well, this wasn't it. It was sure a cold welcome, especially after coming from a house full of relatives, laughing, joking, eating the strudel his mother had baked, listening to the Yiddish records he had brought home from Clinton Street. . . .

Sol walked over to the refrigerator, took out a bottle of beer. Surely they weren't angry because of last night. That would be too much! The night before the five of them had been discussing extra-sensory perception till three in the morning at Irv's apartment. Sol had argued that there are curious facts in the world, events outside our ordinary experience that demand honest investigation. Irv and Pete had argued that these curious facts were nothing but accidents. Sol had laughed in their faces. "These facts have been recorded," Sol had told them. "Don't be goofs." And now the card game.

It was already past 1:30. Pete dealt a new hand. They gave no sign of intending to give up their card game. If they did have something they wanted to talk about it was too late now, Sol told himself. He had a 6:45 train to catch in the morning. Sol mentioned his train. He waited, expecting Irv to say he would drive him home. Irv picked up the discarded cards and shuffled the deck as though he hadn't heard a word. He flipped out the cards, seven to a player. The cards fell silently on the kitchen table. And then Sol realized what it was all about—

This was it. Pete and Irv had asked him to leave his mother's house so that they could pay him off, and send him crawling back to New York. What else? In the world he had grown up in, if you have an automobile and your friend does not, then you drive him home.

But why this game of cards? Words would be much better. Then they could spew out their hate! The whole thing was too damn funny—. But he couldn't resist being caught up in the excitement of the drama. He walked over to the telephone. They all looked up from their cards.

"What's the number of the local cab company?" he asked Pete.

"Woodward 3-7000."

Sol dialed the number. Each turn of the dial filled the room. He knew he was being melodramatic, forcing a crisis—he could easily have walked to the corner and hailed a cab there. Sol wondered what would be the first word said after he finished dialing the number. But nothing would be said. That was the way the game was played. For an instant he felt like fighting it out with them, tooth and nail, laying the whole business bare, his life against theirs. But what would be the use? This was the end of an era. These people had been a very real part of his life. Now he knew that he could never be with them again and for a moment he felt a little sad. Well, he had known that something like this would happen on the trip. At least now he knew in what direction he had to keep going.

THE MODERN JEW'S PATH TO GOD

Inviting the Great Encounter

EMIL. L. FACKENHEIM

ANY Jewish religious thinking that would do justice to both its Jewish sources and to the spiritual and intellectual condition of modern man will have to begin with the recognition that Judaism is not a system of ideas, but a form of religious existence.

Judaism has always been the living encounter of Israel with the God of Israel. The ideas arising in the course of this encounter were and are to be understood as by-products. Modern religious liberalism gravely distorted Judaism when it tried to transform it into a system of ideas, and its prophets into philosophers. Still worse are those distortions common in our day which see in Judaism little more than a useful tool for social and psychological adjustment. None of these "reinterpretations" of Judaism in the 19th and 20th centuries is able to provide a *religious* reason why a Jew should continue to be a Jew—why Judaism ought to survive.

If Judaism is to endure we must understand the meaning and be prepared to vouch for the validity of this God-man encounter. Classical Jewish theology gave its own interpretation and justification, but, for better or worse, this account contains elements unacceptable to modern man and the modern Jew.

Where are we to begin in an attempt to describe the relationship between man and God? And with this question we face at once the full impact of modernity. The ancient and medieval Jew could start out with the certainty that God existed and that He had revealed himself to Israel. For modern man this would be begging the question. What he faces as an immediate fact is that there are men with religious beliefs and that there seems to be such a thing as religious experience—this and nothing more. Moreover, he is aware that these religious beliefs and experiences are at least partly relative to the conditions—historical, social, and psychological—in which they arise. No modern man, then, can start his theology with God and God's revelation, and work his way down to man. The procedure must be the reverse: we must start with man and see whether there is not something in his existence leading up to God—in other words, whether a profound enough self-understanding does not lead to the point where one must make the leap into faith.

This means, of course, going against modern man's basic pattern of thought: the 20th century regards it as a foregone conclusion that to start with man means to end up with man, that man must remain within the circle of his experience. But is this, too, not a begging of the question, a prejudgment that resolves the issue without grappling with it?

IN our epoch of psychoanalysis and psychology, most thinking people, religious and irreligious, are quick to agree that man's consciousness of himself seeks an ultimate "integration." Man is not satisfied merely to have knowledge of this particular desire and

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Is TRADITIONAL Jewish religious thinking irrelevant to the 20th century—or does it merely seem so to many because of our misunderstanding of it? EMIL L. FACKENHEIM believes the latter to be the case, and here tries to substantiate this belief. Mr. Fackenheim was born in Halle, Germany, in 1916, and was ordained a rabbi in 1939. He has done postgraduate work at the Universities of Aberdeen (Scotland) and Toronto, and received his doctorate from the latter school. After serving for several years as rabbi of Congregation Anshe Sholom in Hamilton, Ontario, Mr. Fackenheim became a member of the philosophy department of the University of Toronto, where he now teaches. His article "Can We Believe in Judaism Religiously" appeared in the November 1948 COMMENTARY.

that particular habit; he strives to understand his situation in reality as a whole, *la condition humaine*.

Generally, discussions of this need for ultimate integration are located under the rubric of "self-realization." "Self-realization" is the integrating ideal for the two main philosophic schools—the idealists and the naturalists. The former mean by this term the realization of an ideal self slumbering in every person; the latter refer rather to the whole realm of self-expression, physical as well as spiritual, social as well as individual. It is a conviction common to both idealists and naturalists that man need not turn beyond himself or his society in order to achieve self-understanding and self-integration; he may need his fellow-men but he needs no God. The idealist feels that man is able to form a true image of his ideal self, and that he may approximate this ideal even if he never entirely realizes it. To the naturalist the integrating ideal is individual and social health; evil is mental disorder or social maladjustment. Health produces social harmony because it balances pleasure and duty—a healthy egoism and a healthy altruism; it produces inner harmony because the healthy man concentrates on such of his problems as are soluble, ignoring those which are "insoluble."

Religion, too, is regarded today as but one aspect of "self-realization," so that many modern definitions of religion do not even bother to include God any more. The idealist speaks of God-*ideas*, which express man's highest aspiration but do not refer to a God that exists. For the naturalist, religion is a form of self-expression analogous to art. Both can make sense of religion as a human activity, and can even "justify" its existence by reasons of utility. But neither can make sense of an existing God.

Such, then, is the ideal of "self-realization" which, in its naturalist or idealist form, governs much of present-day life and not a small portion of Jewish religious thinking. (In Judaism the idealist version was the earlier one, springing from the Enlightenment and neo-Kantian sources. The naturalist version, as represented by rabbinical psychiatry and rabbinical social work, is at the moment in full swing.) If the presuppositions of this ideal are correct, then God, as far as man is concerned, is dead. Moreover, we should in that case all come forward and state this fact. Atheism is a respectable position, being a commitment to what the atheist believes to be the truth. From the point of view of religion, the atheist is more a tragic figure than a blasphemer. But the present fashionable combination of disbelief in an existing God with the active perpetuation of a religion as a "useful" or "wholesome" illusion is both intolerable intellectual dishonesty and, from a religious standpoint, blasphemy.

However, the presuppositions of the ideal of "self-realization" are not correct—they are a self-delusion arising from the loss of all metaphysical perspective. For the beginning of religious wisdom lies in the insight that man is not, and never can be, all of one piece, reducible to one set of categories, whether naturalist or idealist; that man is an insoluble contradiction, a child of two worlds.

THE NATURALIST understands correctly enough man's natural needs, his dependence on his environment and the necessity of adjusting to it. But the naturalist is not satisfied with this. He tries to understand human nature as a whole in terms of needs—he makes naturalist principles absolute. This involves him in the most fearful consequences. For if "adjustment to the environment" is not merely a human need which we must recognize, but the ultimate criterion of human conduct, then morality goes by the board and those Germans who adjusted themselves to Nazi rule were as right as are we who adjust ourselves to living in a democracy. And if the ultimate criterion is adjustment to some definition of "psychic health," how are we to determine that definition, how to justify it, and how are we to choose between conflicting definitions? (On what grounds, for instance, other than caprice, can one reject the fascist vision of "psychic health" in the warrior-type—if "psychic health" is really the final standard?) And if religion, as the naturalist maintains, is merely an emotional form of self-expression fulfilling a human need, then religions are to be divided, not into true and false, but into vital and decadent; and the religion of the master race is as good as the religion of the Lord of Hosts, provided only it gives equal emotional satisfaction. In other words, the consistent naturalist is reduced to utter and sheer nihilism.

But this is not all: after all, nihilism might be the truth. But the naturalist's interpretation of human nature not only leads to nihilism, it is also self-contradictory. For what he is saying is that man can never transcend himself in the search for truth and value, that he is always expressing a need, or performing an adjustment either to the environment itself or to some ideal which is relative to the environment. But if this is true, then the naturalist's philosophy is also no more than the product of *his* needs and *his* environment; in other words, the naturalist is doomed to travel along a vicious circle. Why should *his* particular philosophy have any authority for anyone besides himself?

The idealist's version of "self-realization," too, casts us into insuperable difficulties, but they are of the opposite kind. "Self-realization," according to him, is the recognition and realization of ideals which have a normative claim upon man, and which are accepted as valid criteria. And religion is part of this recognition and realization. To quote the Jewish theologian Kaufmann Kohler, who himself gave an idealist interpretation to Judaism: "Jewish religion is a battle for the pure idea of God and man which is not to end until the principle of divine holiness has done away with every form of life that tends to degrade and disunite mankind, and until Israel's Only One has become the unifying power and highest ideal of all mankind."

The idealist, then, is in no danger of denying the validity of values; his downfall is not nihilism or logical self-contradiction; but he constantly and habitually ignores the starkness of facts. No suspicion dawns upon him that the ideals which he has set up before himself might be, as the naturalist is quick to point out, tainted with hidden interest; or that they might be involved in the particularity of his situation. The ideals, say, of 19th-century Reform Judaism undoubtedly contain an element of lasting validity; but they are also the expression of an expanding and often self-satisfied bourgeois civilization. And who are we to distinguish precisely between the eternal and the transient in these ideals, implicated as we are in the conditions of the 20th century?

Let it be granted, however, that the idealist, and the Jew who translates Judaism into terms of ideals, are able to define these ideals so precisely as wholly to transcend the historical situation, so that they represent the absolute "Ought" toward which men should aspire. An immense philosophic effort may accomplish this; and the real downfall of the idealist does not lie in his incapacity to define truly valid ideals. His downfall lies in an illusion so vast that it must astound any sensitive and thinking person that men could fall victim to it. The illusion consists in the notion that the discrepancy between performance and ideal, between what man is and what he ought to be, is merely one of *degree,* whereas in truth it is one of *kind.* The idealist tells himself that the gap between ideal and actuality becomes, in the course of human evolution, narrower and narrower until it will finally disappear. Thus he substitutes, for example, the notion of progress for the much profounder traditional idea of the Messiah. To the idealist there is no need for a God who by His grace eliminates the discrepancy between the real and ideal: man himself eliminates it by his own effort.

But this represents an abysmal failure to understand the tragic element in existence. Progress in degree, important though it is, never spans the gap in kind. The insights of the naturalist are valid in this respect: try though he may to transcend them, man always remains implicated in the web spun by his animal nature. The idealist is quite correct in asserting that the absolute ideal inspires to imitation; but his romantic optimism, together with a good deal of hypocrisy and self-righteousness, makes him overlook the fact that the absolute ideal also paralyzes because of its very absoluteness. For to know of the heights at which we ought to be is to be in despair at the depths at which we are.

Thus both the naturalist and the idealist interpretations of human nature fall to pieces, the former because it denies that man is more than a highly developed animal, the latter because it ignores the fact that man is also and always animal. And along with this collapse, the modern ideal of "self-realization" crumbles into dust.

Classical Judaism had a quite different insight into human nature. It realized that, in the words of Moses of Coucy, "it is because man is half angel, half animal, that his inner life witnesses such bitter war between such unlike natures." On the basis of this insight, classical Judaism saw that the quest for ultimate integration was not a quest for new God-ideas, or new moral systems, or new techniques of adjustment and adaptation—all of which are human products and hence themselves bear the traces of the contradiction of human nature. Classical Judaism understood that it was a search for God—not for religious *experience* or religious *ideals*, but for an *existing* God; a God who really speaks through the turmoil and confusion of human life; a God who, in relating Himself to man, resolves the contradictions of human existence; a God who, by His justice and mercy, gives meaning to human destiny.

But it is quite possible to arrive at the conclusion that no ultimate integration of human existence is possible in humanistic terms, and nevertheless to reject as sheer escapism and "failure of nerve" any relation to the supernatural by virtue of faith. Reason and objective evidence may show life to be a contradiction: does this mean that an honest man should accept a God without evidence, merely in order to resolve that contradiction? Perhaps the contradiction is ultimate; perhaps life as a whole has no meaning. Faced with the alternative between objective evidence and what seems like subjective wishful thinking, what honest man will choose the latter?

This is the crucial question, and before trying to answer it we would do well to consider the position Jewish tradition adopts in this matter.

Biblical and rabbinic tradition are pervaded by the conviction that it is impossible for any sensible man to doubt or deny the existence of God. The modern observer at once jumps to the conclusion that this conviction was due to philosophical naivety and the inability to deal critically with Scriptural texts and the evidence of the senses. It is true, of course, that the traditional Jew did not critically sift his evidence: nature too simply illustrated God's providence, history too naively proved divine retribution, and personal experience was not objectively dissected.

But this is not the core of the matter. For the traditional Jew recognized that all forms of evidence for God's existence frequently fail. Nature as well as human nature harbor both evil and good. History, as prophets and rabbis dramatically exclaim, often fails to give any hint of divine providence. And the anguish of the Psalms reveals that often there is no evidence of God in the forlorn human heart.

The point is that the traditional conviction of the existence of God was independent of both external and internal evidence. If nature or history revealed no meaning, this proved to Biblical and rabbinic Judaism, not that there is no God, but that His ways are past our finding out. If inner experience was sterile, this proved, not that God does not exist, but that He "hides his face." No objective facts and no feeling of being deserted could affect the certainty of God's existence. As Job puts it: "Even though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

What is this absolute and fact-defying certainty of the existence of God? Modern man is tempted to describe it as the peculiar this, if we truly try to understand the faith of our fathers, is an absurd prejudice. It rests on the assumption that religious existence is nothing more than a progressive evolution of religious feeling and ideas; man develops certain notions of God which he later subjects to criticism when he has reached a more advanced stage of objectivity and detachment. Classical Judaism, according to this view, simply had not attained our more mature level of consciousness.

WHAT the moderns do not see is that if, in Jewish tradition, God's existence is nowhere doubted or made dependent on objective evidence, this is not because man is here too "unscientific" to be concerned with such matters: it is because of the overwhelming certainty that in relation to God objective detachment is impossible.

Whither shall I go from Thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there;
If I make my bed in the netherworld, behold,
Thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there would Thy hand lead me,
And Thy right hand would hold me.
(Psalm 139)

It is a gross misunderstanding to say that we have here a somewhat crude formulation of a universal God-idea, or an early stage in the development of pure monotheism. If the Psalmist talks about a living God whom he cannot escape, rather than a universal God-idea that he himself has formed, this is not because he is not detached and critical enough; it is because of his conviction that ultimately man can be detached in thought when he considers *objects*, but not when he considers God. To *judge objectively* of the existence of God, as far as Judaism is concerned, is an attitude already based on a first lie, namely, being a *spectator* where one must be a *participant.* To traditional Judaism, man is here not a spectator and never can be one; he is inevitably a participant.

WE CAN now return to our question: whether a man has the right to seek meaning beyond himself in a realm not open to objective proof, or whether he ought, in all honesty, refuse to go beyond objectively known facts, even if this means to surrender all yearnings for an ultimate integration of his life.

Now if only we understand fully what is implied in Jewish tradition, we make at this point a crucial discovery: as regards the problem of ultimate integration, the alternative between objective detachment and "merely" subjective faith is a false alternative; and the whole so-called "scientific" approach to the problem of religious truth rests on an illusion.

When we deal with objects and the world of objects in scientific or philosophic inquiry, we assume toward them an attitude of objective detachment, the attitude of the spectator. We presuppose that in order to know them we must abstract from this world of objects the fact of our own existence. And we are right in making this assumption; it is indispensable to science and philosophy. In facing the problem of the ultimate meaning of human *existence,* however, we do not deal with a series of objects; we are dealing with our existence, and this existence can never be an object to which we are related as a detached spectator. While we think on existence, we are in fact involved in it as participants. And if, while thinking on existence, we *do* ignore the fact that we ourselves are involved in it, then what we know is not existence itself, but a bare abstraction. And if we take this abstraction for concrete existence itself, we have committed, as far as religious truth is concerned, the most irremediable mistake.

The *concrete* reality of existence is not made up of a relation between spectator and object, but between an I and a Thou; it is a lived, existential, not a scientific, relation, and from this it follows that the truth to be gained about both the Thou and the I cannot be gained in an attitude of objective detachment; it involves commitment and participation. Commitment is inescapable, for whereas we can suspend judgment in matters of thought, we cannot suspend existence.

We can understand now the folly of those who try to consider the question of God's existence from the standpoint of objective detachment, whether their object is to prove or refute it. To make this attempt is to presuppose that God is an object that can be scrutinized by a spectator. Jewish tradition was deeply aware of the error of this assumption. Even another mortal person, in the full concreteness of his Thou, is never an object. If there is a God, and if He is God, He embraces man's existence with such totality as to make objective detachment altogether impossible. If man can detachedly pass judgment on God and His existence, it is not God on whom he passes judgment. And if God exists, and if He is God, He is not the generalized God of the world in general, but each concrete man's personal God—in other words, not the God of the philosophers, but the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Thus the true alternative with which a man is religiously faced is not whether he should be "objective" and leave the question of God's existence open, or whether he should be "biased" and accept what cannot be proven. The true alternative is whether, in the light of the fact that man cannot redeem himself, he should commit himself to a mode of existence which is tragic because it is lived without God and hence without resolution of the contradictoriness of human existence; or whether he should commit himself to God by virtue of faith.

But *does* a commitment to God by virtue of faith constitute a meaningful alternative to tragic existence? Does it remove the essential contradictoriness of human existence? An understanding of religious existence as given in Jewish tradition will answer this question.

Jewish tradition is not concerned with the philosophical description of God as He may be in Himself. We know nothing of God as He is in Himself, and if we describe God objectively, in detachment from the relation he may have to us, we describe an object, an abstraction, but not God. The God of Jewish tradition is the living God who relates Himself to man and Israel. And we know of Him not in speculative detachment but only, if at all, in living encounter.

God is infinite and yet directly related to finite man. For if He were not infinite He would not be God, and if He were not directly related to us, we would either know nothing of Him or else we would speak of an abstraction. He is "enthroned on high and looketh down low" (Psalm 113:5-6). In the words of the Midrash, He is both "far and near": "God is far—for is He not in the heaven of heavens? And yet He is near. . . . For a man enters a synagogue, and stands behind a pillar, and prays in a whisper, and God hears his prayer, and so it is with all His creatures. He is as near to His creatures as the ear to mouth."

The direct relation between the infinite God and finite man is by its very nature, Jewish tradition agrees, a mutual relationship. But if this is so, then we are right in the middle of a paradox: for the free actions and reactions of finite men make a difference to the infinite God.

Jewish tradition expresses the reality of this relation in a well-nigh infinite variety of metaphors, which are mostly anthropomorphic. The rabbis frequently use anthropomorphic language in full consciousness, and for a definite purpose: to say metaphorically and symbolically what cannot be expressed literally. This is evidenced by statements such as these:

" 'Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and I am God.' That is, when ye are My witnesses, I am God, and when ye are not My witnesses, I am, as it were, not God."

And: "When the Israelites do God's will, they add to the power of God on high. When the Israelites do not do God's will, they, as it were, weaken the great power of God."

These statements are, of course, anthropomorphic, but they are not naive anthropomorphisms. The term "as it were" (*k'b'yachol*) has the full rank of a technical term in rabbinic theology, indicating the symbolic character of the statement it qualifies. There is simply no other way to describe the paradoxical fact that the finite acts of finite men cannot, and yet must, make a difference to the infinite God.

AMONG the qualities ascribed to God by rabbinic tradition, divine justice and divine mercy are of unsurpassed prominence. In a well-behaved philosophy, these qualities would either find no place at all, or at any rate they would not be primary; and if they did find a place they would be mutually incompatible. But rabbinic theology does not describe a philosophic abstraction; it describes a living relation. Since one of the terms, man, is a contradiction between spirit and animal, and the relation refers to him insofar as he is a contradiction, the relation itself must bear the traces of that contradiction. God's mercy to the exclusion of His justice would wipe out the distinction between the righteous and the wicked; but this would mean to deny the reality of man's spiritual freedom. To assert God's justice without His mercy would be to imply that men could, if only they wished, become wholly just; and this would deny or ignore man's essential animal dependence. This dialectical situation finds classic expression in the following Midrash: ". . . 'The Lord made heaven and earth.' This may be compared to a king who had some empty glasses. Said the king: 'If I pour hot water into them, they will burst; if cold, they will contract and snap.' What then did the king do? He mixed hot and cold water and poured it into them, and so they remained unbroken. Even so, said the Holy One, blessed be He: 'If I create the world on the basis of mercy alone, its sins will be great; on the basis of justice alone, the world cannot exist. Hence I will create it on the basis of justice and mercy, and may it then stand.' "

By and large, rabbinic tradition refuses to polish off the sharp edges of this paradox. It insists on both unqualified justice and unqualified mercy, recognizing that in mutual compromise both would lose their meaning. Thus, on the one hand, Rabbi Akiba insists on the absolute and unqualified justice of God's judgment, and in the Midrash, God is made to say: "All I do, I do in justice. If I sought to pass beyond justice but once, the world could not endure." On the other hand, divine mercy is equally absolute and unqualified. For whatever their relative merits, before God all men need mercy absolutely. "All men need grace, including Abraham, for whose sake grace came plenteously into the world."

Thus the rabbinic Jew finds ultimate integration only through his relation to God. But this relation does not turn him away from existence in the world; it leads him right into it. What drives the Jew to activity in this world, what constitutes the driving force of the whole *halachah* (law) is not the illusion that man can redeem himself and the world by his own effort—that the Messiah is unnecessary—but the fundamental fact that though man can never hope to span the gap *in kind* between what he is and what he ought to be, he can, *in degree,* narrow the gap indefinitely. God says, "Remove [the evil inclination] a little." How much is a little? The whole heart of the *halachah* is that this can never be known. That is why man, in fulfilling the law, must both tremble and rejoice at the same time: he trembles because what he does, no matter how much it may be, is nothing compared with what he ought to do and can do; he rejoices because it is, after all, something—even before divine justice; and because before divine mercy it is everything. Hence it is said: "Love and fear God; tremble and rejoice when you perform the commandments."

THE above summary, of necessity brief, should yet suffice to indicate that religious existence, as seen by the traditional Jew, is neither the statement of a philosophic system, nor a mere response to the specific problems of any one epoch. It is a commitment to God by virtue of faith—a God who is not the arbitrary "creation" of some age or mind, but the only possible redeemer of the human condition. There is, then, nothing fundamentally "dated" in that religious existence:

since it is made possible by virtue of faith, no science can refute it; since the essential content of that faith corresponds to *perennial* human problems, no mere accidental change affects it.

THERE is, however, one basic modern problem to which tradition has no answer—for it did not know it in its full import.

The life before God, lived by the traditional Jew, had its problems. Whereas there were pregnant moments in history and in an individual's life in which God spoke out, in which it was clear what He demanded of man, and in which the spirit of man was willing, there were other times when God was far and did not speak; or when His word could not be understood; or when men, knowing full well how they ought to respond, suffered the anguish of spiritual impotence. The Jew living before God knew both crisis and fulfillment, anguish and exaltation. But there was one problem he did not know—whereas we know it only too well: the situation of a man before the leap into faith.

This raises our final and most severe problem: can one choose religious existence at will? Can one decide to believe in God? Can one on one's own volition "accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven"?

This question forces us to state what theological reflection can, and what it cannot, do. Theological reflection, after all, is only reasoning on existence, not the living of existence itself. And with reasoning one can only remove the obstacles to faith; a reflection on man's condition, it leads up to the threshold of religious existence, but no further. Here reflection must halt and existence itself begin. Here theology ends and religion must come into being. But *will* it come into being? This is a question to which there is no *a priori* answer. And the question is not whether certain religious experiences will come—which one man might have and another lack. The question is whether or not the man who has a religious experience can *trust* it as revealing the Other, and whether the man in whose heart silence reigns concludes from this silence, not that God does not exist, but that He "hides His face." When men can say the latter, the decision of faith will already have been made, and the ancient dialogue between God and man will come to life once more.

But no man can force the leap into faith; he can merely remove the obstructions. He can understand that existence is open, not closed, and can make himself ready to listen and to answer.

FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

'TWAS A DARK NIGHT IN BROWNSVILLE

Pitkin Avenue's Self-Made Generation

WILLIAM POSTER

IN THE 1920's, when I was very young, every New York Jew could feel certain about one thing: he was superior to anybody living in Brownsville. There was a kind of bilingual folk ballad about this Brooklyn Kasrilevke that we Brownsvillians learned to anticipate from a certain gleam in people's eyes. It began, "'*Siz geven a finstere nacht in Brunzvil*"—it was a dark night in Brownsville—and it was always accompanied by uproarious laughter. Whenever a Brownsville boy ventured outside his home district, some variant of the following dialogue was inevitable:

"Where ya from?"

"Brooklyn."

"Uhhuh. What section?"

"What section?"

"Yea. 'At's what I said. What section?"

"Uhhuh."

"So?"

"So what?"

"So what section of Brooklyn d'ya come from?"

"Ahhh, whaddya boddering me for? It ain' exackly a section. Besides, yuh wooden know nuttin' even if I tole yuh."

"I wooden, huh? So tell me an' see already. What section?"

"Well, its kinda near East New York."

"Ahhh, stop stallin', willya! What street?"

And as you let the answer trickle slowly forth, you would involuntarily brace yourself. "Ahah!" the inevitable eruption would begin, "dat's in Brownsville. You live in Brownsville! Brunzvil, hah, hah, hah, hah, Brahnzvil. Noo? Hahz everyting in Brahnzvil? Hahz Peetkin Avenue? Huh? Hahz Belmont Avenue? Hah? Dey still trown duh gobbidge outta duh windows? I heah dey're buildin' sooers dere now. It's gettin' classy. Yeah! Hah, hah, hah, ho, ho, ho. '*Siz geven a finstere nacht in Brahnzvil.*"

THE formula never varied, and I never saw anyone from Brownsville clever enough to lie his way out of the predicament. A kind of shamefaced loyalty or sense of identity, coupled with a peasant-like inability to pick up social affectations, forced the admission every time. As we grew up, we became accustomed, if never really adjusted, to the fact that we were living in a social zoo: so firmly entrenched was the world's opinion that the Brownsvillian had no choice but to accept it as a mystic, final truth.

Indeed, we found ourselves frequently employing it against each other, boasting about a married sister in East Flatbush, proclaiming how far from the center of Brownsville we lived (I myself, however, lived at its very hub), using every possible means to inch our way out of the mire. And when one of our school teachers in an explosion of rage informed us that Brownsville was one huge cesspool of illiteracy and hoodlumism, and

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that she had narrowly escaped being demolished by a flying bag of garbage that very morning, we all hastened to agree with her.

When we were about to be graduated from Brownsville's Groton, PS 66, rumors were as plentiful as nuts on Passover. No use trying to get into the choicer high schools—we were told and told each other—because the name of "Sixty-Six" was anathema to every principal in Brooklyn. We were all on a special Board of Education blacklist. Maybe the best thing to do was just to get our "workin' papers" and comply with the law by enduring the brief purgatory of "continuation school," after which society might leave us in the sodden untutored peace we felt was our natural condition. After all, didn't our parents assure us, as we came streaking up from a punchball game covered with grime and sweat, gobbled our food, and rushed off to one of a hundred feverish nocturnal activities, that we were all bums, gangsters, truckdrivers, "expressmen," *grubjankes* (coarse louts), *boolvans* (brainless bullies), *paskudnyaks* (sheer vilenesses), accidents of nature who would doubtless end up murdering their own parents?

But publicly sensitive as we were to the opinions of our teachers, relatives, and outsiders, to ourselves our habits and morals seemed not only pardonable but perfectly natural and even praiseworthy. Once back in the inner world of Brownsville boyhood, we were content with being what everyone else reviled, and ardently desired to be even rougher, tougher, dirtier, more ill-mannered, more foul-mouthed, more vicious, more uncompromisingly opposed to every kind of law, order, and authority. True, boys in all the lower-class New York neighborhoods took pride in their toughness; but in Brownsville, somehow, we worked at it full time.

Built up nearly overnight on rundown farmland, Brownsville, in the 20's, had come to occupy an area of about two square miles set apart by such natural boundaries as the IRT El on Livonia Avenue, the BMT El on Junius Street, the junction of Pitkin Avenue's macadam with the greensward of Eastern Parkway at Howard Avenue, and the Liberty Avenue trolley. It was, I believe, the largest solidly Jewish community in the city. Other reputedly Jewish sections may have contained more Jews than Brownsville's two hundred thousand, but they were likely to be strongly Jewish for only a block or two and then give way to a mixed ethnic pattern. Brownsville was a Jewish island. I would guess that the population was about ninety-five percent Jewish and four percent Italian, with a handful of Negroes and a few Polish janitors making up the remainder.

Up to the age of twelve or so, a Brownsville child scarcely saw any members of other groups except for teachers and policemen, and never really felt that the Jews were anything but an overpowering majority of the human race. I don't think my contemporaries and I believed that the figures who loomed largest in our imagination—say, George Washington, Nathan Hale, Tom Mix, Babe Ruth, and Jack Dempsey—were actually Jewish, but we never clearly thought of them as anything else.

In a period when most of New York's Jews were striving desperately to become Americanized, perhaps Brownsville's solid Jewishness alone was enough to account for the section's lowly status. But there were other factors. For one thing, circumstances seem to have attracted a specific type of Jew out to Brownsville: I have the impression that the great majority came from the regions of Russia around Minsk, with relatively few of Polish, Rumanian, or any other origin. By and large, they were an energetic, hustling, robust lot, but rarely possessed of any but the simplest material ambitions. The desire for respectability or elegance must have been weak in them to begin with, and Brownsville scarcely supplied the soil on which it could thrive. Essentially, the district was the New York center of the *pruste yid,* the "plain Jew," remarkably level-headed, and rarely noteworthy for imagination or lofty aspirations. Most of the older men had their occupations in the neighborhood; they were storekeepers, real estate men, peddlers of fruits and vegetables, the auxiliaries of these businesses, and those professionals indispensable to the community.

The most prosperous merchant of Pitkin Avenue and the poorest potato peddler were likely to live in the same house or adjacent ones, and to buy most of their food, clothing, and furniture at the same stores—if only out of lack of desire or time to do otherwise. Brownsvillians, in general, were either so busy or so unimaginative that "conspicuous waste" or snobbery of any kind was minimal: when one of them finally did get the idea and had the leisure and the cash, he migrated to another section. But as long as he stayed in Brownsville, he remained subject to its prevailing egalitarianism of tone and manners. Likewise, the children all went to the same schools, and played together in packs in which the children of the fairly affluent (like myself) were indistinguishable from those of pushcart venders and junkmen (like most of my playmates).

In appearance, too, Brownsville was egalitarian, with no very distinguished residence within its confines, and the streets pretty much littered and grimy everywhere, though there was considerable space inside and about the buildings, and it did not at all resemble the congested, malodorous slum districts of Manhattan. The dwellings were of every variety and looked as though they had been dropped chaotically from the sky, while the business establishments gave a curious appearance of systematic arrangement: seven blocks of furniture stores on Rockaway Avenue, so that a walk down that street was like a girl's domestic daydream of plushy sofas and gleaming mahogany bedroom suites; five teeming, pungent blocks of pushcarts, groceries, and "appetizing" stores on Belmont Avenue; men's and women's clothing and similar emporia on the ten busy blocks of Pitkin Avenue. A huge six-block square of junkshops, tinsmithies, stables, garages, and miscellaneous small enterprises surrounded these main arteries. How it all rang and clattered and hammered and buzzed and smelled! There wasn't a quiet square yard in the whole district.

For all its reputation, Brownsville in the 20's was scarcely a poverty-stricken neighborhood. The merchants of Pitkin Avenue had prospered in the postwar boom, often accumulating enough surplus capital to open second or third stores or to dabble in real estate (a Brownsville passion). Belmont Avenue flourished on a largely deserved reputation for cheapness and quality that drew customers from a wide area. And while selling vegetables from a pushcart may not have looked very elegant, it was often amazingly lucrative: one peddler was reputed to have three cellars and a fleet of four trucks devoted solely to stocking his cart—which was, indeed, always surrounded by a large group of chaffering *weiblach*.

Junk, rag, and paper dealers, who had gone into business with nothing but a horse and wagon, their bare hands, and inexhaustible patience, expanded their lots, acquired trucks, and even ventured into manufacturing. Stables gave way to garages—alas for the children who in the early 20's could still watch the blacksmiths at their forges and stuff old pocketbooks with horse manure for the unwary! The owner of the local barber shop replaced his flyblown mirrors, hired an extra helper, and to the consternation of the conservatives installed a *zoftig* blond manicurist. The tailor, who could be seen in his undershirt sweating over the pressing machine, hired a regular delivery boy instead of luring us from our games with the promise of big tips. The gabbling flock of carpenters, painters, plumbers, and masons that used to swarm on the corner of Stone and Pitkin Avenues dwindled noticeably on weekdays.

Unemployment, the great blight on the prosperity of the 20's, could not have been too great in Brownsville because nearly everybody was in business for himself. Good food could be had cheap and rent was low. Many families lived in two- or three-story houses that were sturdily constructed, relatively spacious, and comfortably, if primitively, heated by wood or coal stoves and gas radiators. Free of the high costs of social conformism and ostentation, Brownsville didn't fare badly.

I once read, in a local newspaper, a series of statistics purporting to show that Brownsville had the lowest mortality rate of any community of similar population in the country. The claim seems plausible. Though ridden by its sense of inferiority, Brownsville was at bottom free of many of the inhibitions, tensions, and pretensions that are among the most lethal factors of modern life. Heedless of medicine, dentistry, manners, child psychology, balanced diets, and social distinctions, Brownsville roared, worked, played, ate, and slept. The major problems of human relations were settled by a yell, a laugh, a shrug, or a slap. There were, surely, heartaches and headaches of every variety, but I think that the people of Brownsville knew in their bones how little one actually needs to cushion oneself against the shocks of life.

In an odd way and for a brief period, Brownsville fulfilled the age-old Jewish need for a sanctuary, an escape from the consciousness (if not the fact) of being a minority in exile. To a child, at any rate, Brownsville was a kind of grimy Eretz Yisrael without Arabs. Living in a world all Jewish, where no alien group imposed its standards, he was secure in his own nature. What social shame he did feel was simply for his own lack of shame when, outside the boundaries of Brownsville, he ran up against those for whom a nervous consciousness of the opinions of the world had become a badge of superiority.

True, his first vision of the real state of affairs was apt to produce something like a traumatic shock. Indeed, to reach maturity with anything like a normal relation to society was difficult for Brownsville's second generation. All that remained functional to their parents out of the wreck of the European heritage were some simple physical and prudential precepts and a few copybook maxims. Maturity alone constituted the power of the parent over the child, for the reciprocal relation by which parents derive strength from conventions and conventions derive strength from parents was shattered by the break from Europe, by social change and the facts of life. Too often the children were the guides in matters of American language and custom, and the parent could never be certain that even the most outrageous adolescent behavior did not issue from some mysterious American norm that his child understood better than he. The amazing thing, then, was not that Brownsville produced some criminals, freaks, and barbarians, but that so many did manage somehow to obey the laws, attend school, and go on to become proper or even distinguished citizens.

WHEN he first awoke to purposeful consciousness, at about the age of five, a Brownsville boy found himself an integral part of what he called his "gang," a group of boys with a whole network of rules, aims, and standards. The gang consisted of twenty to thirty males of approximately the same age. They had names not only like Irv, Joey, Dave, but also Yookie, Doodie, Cockeye Sidney, Cripple Natie, Gimpty, Roobs, Bensie, Baby, Abie Kabibble, Koko, Meetsgah, Knockout, Avrum, Blowie, Moish, Gyp, Heshie, Yushkie, Brownie, Blackie, Whitey, Punk, Zigzag. There were no tomboys in the gang. Until puberty, a Brownsville boy studiously ignored the existence of girls his own age except when they turned up playing jacks on a handball court, in which case the jacks were summarily kicked into the gutter, followed, if necessary, by their owners. Older girls were eyed with fanatic hostility: we bombarded them with ash-filled snowballs, chalked up their coats on Halloween, shouted abuse at them, and elicited screeches by nipping their ankles with our nails while making cat-noises or dropping dead mice in their paths.

Inclusion in the gang was absolute, and human relations outside it were cut to a minimum. Even its territory was staked out with minute precision. When two Brownsville kids who were strangers had some contact, the first question was, "What's your block?" and the answer established identity. A gang might not inhabit a full block but only a specific sector of it. Thus "my block" was Osborne Street between Pitkin and Glenmore Avenues, and the region my gang regarded as its domain took up one-third of this area, starting from Pitkin Avenue. Our territory ended where a small group of Italian families and their offspring took over. The section of the block nearest to Glenmore Avenue belonged to a second Jewish group. Small as the area was, the three juvenile clans were as tightly contained as primitive tribes.

Competition was intense between the two Jewish gangs; the punchball games between the two, with every cent we could muster bet on them, were the gala events of the block. There was, I believe, a real difference between the two gangs, a difference perhaps imperceptible to the outsider but crucially important to the boys themselves. The Glenmore Avenue boys were a little taller, cleaner, and more refined, and they could make us feel awkward and stupid by their sneers and by the greater precision, control, and clarity of their language and action. We were cruder, noiser, more energetic. The punchball games expressed this difference, and it would be hard to say who had the edge.

But such was the disorder of juvenile Brownsville that nobody ever really won anything at all. Whenever a game or contest tended to a conclusion, the party in danger of defeat simply smashed up the system of conventions and rules that made the game possible; it was a deliberate technique of planned anarchy. Whether at checkers, marbles, arguments, fights, punchball games, you simply refused to acknowledge a defeat and developed every possible stratagem to obliterate even the marks of victory. In order to win at marbles, for example, you not only had to have superior skill, but often the ability to beat up your opponent, out-argue him, enlist the sympathies of onlookers, and hang on to your booty and the sensation of victory against every conceivable psychological attack, including the ultimate "OK, dogface, you win, pick up duh marbles 'n go home to your mudder."

Suppose you won all the marbles and pennies of one of your opponents in a game that included four players. He would promptly insist on a loan, with the support of the other two if they happened to be losing. If the game ever dwindled down to two players you could maintain your right to quit, but the loser made sure you never did. After the first loan, one altercation succeeded another and you were lucky if you finally got away with one-tenth of your legitimate winnings—with sneers and catcalls following you for being a quitter (the loser never quit). And at home you were met with a bawling-out interspersed with slaps for being plastered with mud and three hours late for dinner. How could you explain that you couldn't quit if you were losing and you couldn't quit if you were winning?

Punchball games got under way only after a half-hour of skullduggery connected with choosing for first turn at bat, and frequently a game never reached the second half of the first inning, the side at bat either preventing a third out from being called by trampling on the first baseman, or else refusing to admit it when it was called. If the game survived these obstacles, then the losing side would stall till darkness enabled them to enter a claim of no decision, or would break the game up in a brawl in which the stakeholder (if anyone could be persuaded to fill that perilous post) nearly got torn in two.

BETWEEN the Pitkin Avenue gang and the Italian clan in the middle of the block, relations were slight, consisting of brief, jittery moments of sociability, and bursts of warfare in which, despite a considerable inferiority of numbers, the Italians maintained equality. We were physically stronger, I think, and won our share of individual fights, but their group fighting tactics were much more advanced than ours: they stuck together like a unit of the Maffia, swooped down on us suddenly while we were dispersed in twos or threes, feinted frighteningly at our testicles, batted us over the head with stockings full of ashes, and sometimes even succeeded in taking our pants down. By the time we could get organized to counter-attack, they would have disappeared into their lairs. Once we went to a lumberyard and armed ourselves with thin twelve-foot lances with which we kept them off the streets for days, but they soon procured lead pipes of equal length and wreaked havoc among us. There were also occasional flurries of ash, garbage, tin-can, stone, and bottle throwing.

The Italian group included the inevitable displaced Jew, and in my gang there were two Italian brothers called Frankie and Brownie, as well as a Polish boy called Petey. The Jewish boy among the Italians was known as Yushkie. He was an unusually tall, thin boy, rather bitter, grim, and distrait in appearance. His bitterness probably came from the fierce baiting he was subjected to for being foreign-born — a "mockey." We regarded him as a renegade, and, since he used Italian fighting tactics, felt towards him a mingled respect, hatred, and horrified repulsion. We never spoke to him or included him in our games, and he was likely to be the special target in any clash between the two gangs.

Frankie and Brownie associated with us simply by preference. Their parents were somewhat more Americanized than the other first-generation Italians on the block, who scarcely spoke English at all, and Frankie and Brownie were perhaps a trifle more refined than the other Osborne Street Italians, who were a very rough lot indeed.

While we were very "race-conscious," once someone was inside the gang we completely forgot about differences except when the inevitable problem of chalking up boxball boundaries on the Sabbath came up. Many religious precepts were flouted with next to no concern, but writing in public on the Sabbath was an infraction we all avoided because it had become amalgamated with our more fundamental preoccupation with prestige. The taboo was so powerful that even Frankie, Brownie, and Petey, as well as the most irreligious Jewish boys, would refuse to violate it because of the lowering of status that would ensue. We usually bullied Cockeye Sidney, the lowest-ranking member of the gang, into doing it, and then excluded him from the game he had made possible. If necessary, with a few kicks in the seat of his pants.

Despite his inward anarchy, the life of a Brownsville boy was as regulated, definite in its objectives, and ritualized as that of a member of a primitive tribe. Whenever he could wrench himself free from such chores as eating, sleeping, school, and homework, all of which he had to be coerced into by force or the threat of force, he got together with the gang, from which he could never be excluded unless its psychological or physical hazards were more than he could endure. And as long as he had sufficient strength to participate, he was relieved of some of the worst terrors of childhood. All kinds of attitudes were fixed and ordered for him: the limits of his territory, his position within the gang, his relations with strangers and with boys of different ages.

Age groups were marked out by a mobile but definite system. No matter what a boy's age, there was always a group of boys younger than himself which he called "duh liddle guys" and an older group which he called "duh big guys." And he himself to his juniors was a "big guy" and to his seniors a "liddle guy." A cluster of rights, prerogatives, and attitudes was attached to this relation which had so powerful a grip that even when one saw a "big guy" some ten or fifteen years later, some of the old feelings were automatically revived.

Among the "big guys" were to be found all one's "big brudders" and among the "liddle guys" were to be found the "kid brudders." It was an absolute obligation of "big brudders" to protect "kid brudders" and redress any physical injury to them, even if it was inflicted in fair fight with a peer. At some desperate point in a fight between two boys of equal age, the one who was losing would threaten his opponent with the might of the older males of his family. This tactic was orthodox and did not lessen the status of the individual using it, beyond the natural drop in status resulting from his defeat. A skillfully used "big brudder" was an advantage paid for by receiving numerous raps on the head, while a "kid brudder" was on the whole a liability, useful for errands and menial tasks and as a source of admiration, but altogether too likely to subject his protector to the gratuitous perils of fights with all the "big guys" whom he happened to antagonize.

If the hazards of gang life were great, there were many compensations. To its members the gang gave a wide variety of skills, a set of functioning attitudes, and a highly specialized language. If you talked in the right tough style you wouldn't get thrown off a handball court or have your checkers stolen; in fact you could push other boys aside or steal their checkers. A fashionable idiom, used audaciously, served, as it does in many a society with different values, to conceal weaknesses. Humor and wit were also great values, enhancing one's position directly by attraction or indirectly when used to degrade someone else. Words were also intoxicants.

At the age of three or four, boys held hands and pivoted rapidly until they got dizzy, shouting: "Sailor boy, sailor boy, go so slow, sailor boy, sailor boy, go so fast. . . ." Soon afterwards they learned serious and humorous threat language: "I'll mobbilize yuh," "I'll kick yuh teet' down yuh t'roat," "I'll spit down yuh appetite 'n' charge yuh for a seltzer." They learned how to get the proper snarl into phrases like "gidduhhellahtaheah" and "go tell yuh mudder yuh fadder wants yuh." They picked up a score of different chants for choosing who was to be "it," and a number of jingles and songs, usually obscene.

The earliest game I recall playing was also verbal. It was called "Milkman." The "milkman" went to each player and took an order for bottles of milk which he delivered in the form of slaps on the hand. He then came to collect for the milk and the "customer" refused to pay in the most insulting fashion possible. The "milkman" asked for an explanation. The "customer" informed him that he had found some horrifying object in the milk such as a rat's tail or a lump of horse manure. The "milkman" then asked a series of questions to all of which he got the same answer:

"Waddya eat every morning?"

"A rat's tail."

"Wot's your fadder?"

"A rat's tail."

"Wot time is it?"

"A rat's tail."

"Waddya use for brains?"

"A rat's tail."

The "milkman" gesticulated wildly and made weird faces while he asked the questions. If the "customer" broke into laughter or gave any other answer but the original one, he paid a forfeit by doing something difficult or painful, such as "goin' troo duh mill"—crawling rapidly on hands and knees between the straddled legs of all the other players, who paddled his behind as hard as they could (there was always one wise guy who held the crawler between his knees until he got up and started a fight).

Before we were twelve, my friends and I had learned not only what we were required to do in school and an enormous number of physical games and feats, but also a considerable amount about all the local businesses and the society in which we lived. We had learned a score of fairly complicated card games including poker, casino, rummy, pinochle, hearts, blackjack, fantan, banker and broker, and an Italian game called "brisk." We shot dice, placing our bets according to a close approximation of the true probabilities—an intellectual feat beyond the scope of many well-educated adults. Between the ages of nine and twelve, we also read, I would judge, no less than fifteen hundred novels—Merriwells, Nick Carters, Ted Strongs, Tom Swifts, and Baseball Joes—as well as innumerable issues of *Sport Stories, Detective Stories,* and *Amazing Stories.*

There was not a fence, hole, wall, lot, or cellar in the block that we did not use for some childhood purpose, and as we moved towards adolescence our knowledge spread to take in the entire section and then beyond it to Coney Island, Ebbets Field, and the big Brooklyn parks and movies. We also organized half-uniformed athletic teams that participated erratically in interborough competition—though nearly all sports and social organizations were short-lived, breaking up in bitter conflicts over questions of power, privilege, and obligation.

In fact, the battle for status was the chief determinant of our lives. Status came from skill in fighting and in such key games as punchball and basketball, but also from a certain indefinable quality of personality, the gift of making others accept and conform to one's style of behavior. Even fighting was not so simple an affair as it seemed on the surface, and success in fighting was not altogether a matter of sheer physical skill. The question of who could fight whom was constantly on our minds, and hardly a day went by without someone trying to put some newly conceived opinion of himself to the test. The boys at the very top were more or less unchallenged. Those at the very bottom were likewise immune so long as they accepted the humiliations and insults which were their daily lot. But for a boy lodged precariously in the middle ranks, life was a tornado of fists and faces, the faces he was out to damage on his way up or the fists that were hammering him down to the nightmarish, infra-human realm populated by Cockeye Sidney and his similars.

WE HUNTED and fished, too, though making the true metropolitan conversion by which all the quarry tracked down by human beings throughout the ages is reduced to the glittering tokens of civilization.

Mallard and teal the fowler downs in fall.
But season is always open for green game.
All weapons used; hand or enchanting hair,
Instructed dice or dynamite or flame.
To pipe of organ some in chapel tread,
Others in alley with a pipe of lead.
(John Frederick Nims, "Dollar Bill")

The cellars of many buildings in Brownsville went out some distance under the sidewalk and were covered by grates. Peering through the grate you could spy, some twenty feet down, a tangled mass of papers and heterogeneous objects among which, at all times, there might be a coin. A boy who was of a speculative turn of mind would steal a long, thin stick from the lumber yard and then lie flat on the sidewalk, gimlet-eyed, probing the mass of junk. If, after probing perhaps for hours while pedestrians cursed him, shopkeepers threatened him, and other kids sneered and goosed him, a coin emerged, he would go into action. After careful consideration of the ratio of investment to return, he would attach a wad of chewing gum to the end of the stick, and then a tense struggle began. It took an absolutely sure hand, a keen eye, and perfect technique to attach the coin without losing the bait in a mass of papers. Insecurely attached and as willful as any fish, the coin usually wriggled off before it was reeled in. When an elevation was successful, it still had to be gaffed through the narrow bars and defended against possible onslaughts. But any sum from a nickel to a half-dollar went a long way, buying handfuls of sticky candy, soda, flavored ices, chances on a punchboard, or a trip to the movies.

We hunted also in the empty lots, for bits of brass or lead we could sell to the junkyards, frequently stripping decorated panes of glass of their lead linings or scraping the precious metal from milk cans and boiling it down to lumps. We needed money for a hundred different commodities and were always on the alert for every penny, clipping dimes from grocery bills, chiselling from older members of the family, betting, thieving on a small scale from fruit markets and local shops and trading with what we stole. We worked, too—running errands for tailors and printers, stacking boxes for the Pitkin Avenue merchants, shoving fruit cases around on Belmont Avenue, or unloading bananas.

It was in the area of work that the difference between the poor and the affluent began to be felt. The poor boy was usually required to do some work at a very early age, and by the time he was twelve, he worked in the family store or helped around the pushcart and got regularly paid for it, usually by the hour. Thus he quickly established adult economic relations with his parents. The "bourgeois" kids, on the other hand, were held down to the smallest allowances possible, because their parents figured that the less money they had the less trouble they would get into. Thus it was the children from more affluent homes who, in the world of boyhood, were "poor"—and they bitterly envied the poorer children their usable wealth and grownup airs.

Indeed, "workin'" and the maturity and independence it implied held in our eyes an immense glamor. Gathered around a stoop for our nightly philosophical and educational sessions, we spoke passionately of our desires to become plumbers, bricklayers, carpenters, or businessmen. A few romantics wanted to be star athletes and a couple of little cynics wanted to be bookies or gangsters, but I don't think I ever heard anyone express a longing to be any kind of professional or even to go to college. The traditional Jewish passion for higher education as well as many another "Jewish trait" simply fell apart under the violent impact of street life. Out of the hundred or so boys I knew best in Brownsville, I don't think more than ten got to college, despite fairly good opportunities. And many sons of fairly affluent parents never got past grade school, the lure of punchball, movies, and "workin'" proving stronger than parental authority or desire.

UNLOADING bananas was the biggest working thrill of all, because we were selected primarily for strength and actually worked with grown men. It also had a sensuous appeal that nothing else quite matched. The banana wagon would come clattering slowly down Osborne Street, and when it got about two blocks from its destination the drivers would begin to bawl in loud, hoarse, singsong tones: "A load! A looooaaaaaad!" Punchball, handball, and boxball games would melt in its path. The chant was echoed and re-echoed with every variety of musical and verbal adornment by scores of kids, and by the time the wagon reached the cellars, a midget army was running after it and clinging to its sides. The drivers would climb majestically down from their perch to inspect the crowd of anxious small-fry desperately displaying their muscles and standing on their toes. I was rejected frequently, until one day by weaseling through the pack, stretching myself till I nearly split, and croaking loudly in the weird imitation bass I used in order to keep from being assigned to the soprano section of the music class (a fate worse than death), I got myself hired.

It was not an unmixed pleasure. The huge green stalks weighed nearly as much as I did and it was touch and go from the moment one was handed to me till I got it (or it got me) down the steps and onto its hook on the ceiling. I suspected the older men of laughing at me and was frequently warned to beware of "tearan*too*las," huge poisonous spiders with a sting that made you turn purple all over and die in agony. You had to work fast and the ache in your muscles became more and more painful and your hands got cut to ribbons by the strings. The ordeal lasted about four hours and I got through it out of sheer pride and fear of ridicule. The pay was about two dollars, which along with the tremendous rise in my self-esteem, was just enough to compensate for a broken back.

The Brownsville juvenile was, to be sure, only a special variant of the genus *boy*, produced out of a variety of conditions: American democracy; the confused, rambunctious energy of Brooklyn; the isolation of a part of the Jewish heritage—its physical, practical component divorced from its spiritual perspective—partially cracking in the long, convulsive effort to maintain the natural continuity between generations despite the actual vastness of the gulf that yawned between the European-born parents and their children.

The relation between generations is basically always the same—the old connections have to be maintained, and at the same time they must give and expand to accommodate growth. But what strains the machinery was subjected to! What wrenching occurred as out from under the tremendous corpus of the centuries-old Jewish development lying motionless as a whale cast up on the strand of the great continent, crept the children, breathing a bewildering mixture of the heavy, humanity-laden air of the Old World and the thin atmosphere of the New! Nature itself seemed to have lost track of its norms, and groaned, baffled by the problem history had set for it. Relations between children and parents reached an extreme of imbalance, not only among the Jews but in all of an America that was going, at different rates, through a prolonged crisis of transplantation in which scarcely anyone has had more than an inkling of what is to be preserved or destroyed, what will grow and what decay. There were cleavages between the generations that were too abrupt, too mental, with an insufficient quantum of the fertile human plasma carried over; and there were continuities that were too fertile, too rich and stagnant to permit the necessary "adjustments."

Everywhere in New York, Jewish children were under the double compulsion of securing an extraordinary amount of protection from their parents and erecting unusually strong defenses against them to preserve their relation to the present. The result was that certain elements in the personalities of the children remained almost statically identified with their parents while other elements were so sharply divorced as to make for excessive conflict. In Brownsville—and this, I think, was true of Brownsville especially—the struggle between children and parents was almost purely on a physical and practical level. Intellectual and spiritual independence came easily to the Brownsville child—too easily, perhaps, so that it was never really acquired and always undervalued. But the right to breathe freely, to use one's arms and legs and voice forcibly, to own personal possessions, to take up residence away from home—all these privileges had to be conquered inch by painful inch. Brownsville's parents, unsure of their tradition and how to transmit it to their children, could not do battle in the realm of the spirit; but they devoted correspondingly more energy to the bitter struggle for mere physical obedience: be on time to dinner, go to school, go to bed, stop hollering!

Meanwhile, all the street life of Brownsville fought against them to develop in their children the most immediately necessary qualities. The weak were simply despoiled of all rights and privileges and every shred of self-respect. Pity, charity, remorse were nearly non-existent emotions among Brownsville's male juveniles, and even the weakest of the underdogs would rather have had his face pushed in the mud than be made the object of such mawkish feelings. The incredible Brownsville intolerance of weakness and ineptitude often brought out the necessary qualities by sheer compulsion. And, indeed, I have often thought, perhaps with some of the crustiness typical of those whose early experience has been rough, that the reformist epithet "underprivileged children" should be reserved for the offspring of the wealthy and genteel—it is they who are deprived of the natural endowment of children: the rich physical life, the concealment from adults, the instinctive awareness of the lawless, unacculturated state of man. How can anyone finally accept the restraints of society without resentment unless he has experienced something like the opposite? And how can any society recreate its institutions unless it obtains from somewhere a glimmer of what lies beyond them?

There was also a solidarity among the boys that was quick, instinctive, and very often heroic. Once, when I was about eight years old, I went adventuring on the BMT elevated lines with two boys who were slightly older than I. We had used up our money and had waited on one of the platforms so long that we thought no trains were coming and decided to cross the tracks to the opposite side. My friends hopped up on the other platform easily. I tried desperately and couldn't make it, and was still stubbornly and stupidly trying to clamber up when a train roared over the horizon. I would have been ground to cinders if one of the other boys had not leaped down and simply shoved me up on the platform while the other pulled me. He then clambered up a cinema second ahead of the train. It was quite an exhibition of agility, the result not so much of courage or nerve as sheer, unhesitant animal instinct.

The peculiar thing was that nobody thought such acts in the least praiseworthy, or expected or received gratitude for them. I was in this case absolutely furious with the boy who saved my life because he had had the temerity to think I wouldn't have made it without help, and both the other boys baited me vindictively for my clumsiness for days afterwards.

On another occasion we were all playing "follow the leader" on the roof of a six-story building. We were prancing ostentatiously but cautiously near the edge when one of the lesser wits of our group, a boy we called "Abie Kabibble," stumbled and started to fall backwards off the roof. One kid grabbed his sweater. The sweater tore and there was a wild scramble and a series of grabs and Abie wound up hanging from the roof by one hand while two of us held the other and the rest held on to whatever portions of his clothing they could grasp and to each other. None of us ever did figure out how we got him back up without going over the edge ourselves, but we did.

About a week later one of the kids who had helped to rescue him fast-talked Abie into betting a dollar on his ability to hack off his own finger at one blow with a knife from a butcher shop in which he did odd jobs. Abie lost the bet by a shred or so, but came so close to winning that he had to be taken to a hospital for repairs.

"WE ARE all much more simply human than anything else," Harry Stack Sullivan wrote some time ago, and since the statement was probably meant to apply to psychiatrists and schizophrenics, it will serve, I hope, to de-emphasize the writer's necessary exaggeration of the uniqueness of what he has seen. There were, indeed, dark nights in Brownsville, nights when we ran or hid in secret places, acknowledging no law but our own, hurling each other and being hurled against the concrete from every possible angle, caught in an endlessly tormenting, endlessly exhilarating game with little or no human knowledge we found acceptable to light our way into the future. But so it must have been in many another corner of America, cut off as ours was from a working central culture, from any principles of authority and conduct sufficient to contain life as it is really lived and guide us into the age when animal exuberance would be inadequate, when we would need something more and would find instead only a blank wall that spins us like balls back into the youth we should have long since outworn.

CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE TIME WE WAITED FOR THE MESSIAH

A Polish Town in 1905

I. J. SINGER

I. J. Singer, who died in 1944 in New York, is regarded by many critics and general readers as among the two or three most important figures in modern Yiddish literature. Translations of his novels and short stories have appeared in English, Hebrew, and numerous European languages. Americans may be most familiar with his popular play *Yoshe Kalb* (1932) and his novel *The Brothers Ashkenazi,* a chronicle of Jewish life in the industrial city of Lodz, which received high critical praise and was very widely read when it was published in this country in 1936. Among Singer's other works that have been translated into English are *The River Breaks Up,* a volume of short stories (1938), and *East of Eden* (1939). Singer was born in Bilgoray, Poland, in 1893, and lived most of his adult life in Warsaw until his coming to the United States in 1939.

The selection below, translated from the Yiddish by Lucy S. Dawidowicz, is taken from Singer's autobiographical work, *Fun a Velt Vos Is Nishto Mer,* published last year by Matones Farlag in New York. It appears here by permission of Mrs. Genie Singer, the copyright owner.—Ed.

"The Messiah will come in the year 5666 [1906]"—that was the idea afloat among the Jews in the small town of Leczyna in Russian Poland. It took hold of men and women alike, child and adult. First of all, the sufferings that must precede the advent of the Messiah were clearly evident in the pogroms, in the revolution, and in the war. Second, people had seen omens: red spots in the evening skies, which could signify only the coming of the Messiah. Third, it was figured out, as simple as two and two are four, that the war between Russia and Japan was in reality the war between Gog and Magog, who must do battle before the Messiah comes. Fourth, every chapter and verse of the Bible, every passage in the Gemara and other holy writings, indicated that 5666 would be the year of redemption.

My father, the rabbi of Leczyna, was most proficient in finding these proofs. No matter what holy book he opened, the Bible, the Gemara, the Zohar and other Cabalistic writings, he always discovered some text which would demonstrate, by computation of the numerical value of the letters, that the Messiah would come in 5666. My father, the perennial enthusiast and believer, would glow with joy telling my mother about his new proofs. My mother, a daughter of *mitnagdim* [rabbinic opponents of the Hasidim], did not try to refute him, but her piercing large gray eyes cooled my father's ardor. He would then escape to the *bet hamidrash,* the house of study, and tell about his new findings.

"Jews, it's clear as day. The deliverance is at hand," he said, citing his chapters and verses which, no matter how computed, always added up to 5666.

One day Big Mendel from Ger came and said the Gerer Rebbe himself had let it slip that the Messiah was coming. It had happened this way: one of the Rebbe's best Hasidim and scholars was drafted into the Russian Army and sent to the Japanese front. All the time, this Hasid never tasted cooked food, living only on dry bread and water to avoid *treife*. But that wasn't all. When he was killed on the battlefield, it was found that he had all the time worn under his uniform a shroud and prayer shawl so that if he fell, he could be buried in the holy garments. Jewish soldiers informed the Gerer Rebbe, who wept and said the millennium had come. What the Hasid's shroud had to do with the Messiah was not very clear. But it was quite enough that the Gerer Rebbe had said so, and his words were carried far and wide where Jews lived.

Other holy men also let fall some mention of the day of deliverance. The Russian defeats at the front were brought as proof of the coming of the Messiah. The Jews in our *bet hamidrash* ceased their religious study and their business, just talking endlessly about the redemption. In the morning, in the middle of the day, and especially between the afternoon and evening services, the Jews clustered in a circle under the dim light of the *bet hamidrash* kerosene lamp and talked about one thing—the coming of the Messiah. He was expected any day, any moment. People listened all the time, pricking their ears to catch the first blast of the Messiah's great *shofar*. Some Jews became so absorbed in the redemption that they neglected their affairs, their stores, and their homes. I even remember one day between afternoon and evening services when Yehoshua Glusker said he would not repair the roof of his house for winter, because it was a waste of time and money: "We will soon go to Eretz Yisrael anyway, so why should I bother?"

Only Old Berel, who was said to be over ninety, laughed at Yehoshua Glusker. "You'll have to fix your roof more than once before the Messiah will come," he contended. "When I was a boy, they said the same thing about the coming of the Messiah, and still I served twenty-five years in the army and nothing happened."

The crowd in the *bet hamidrash* didn't even want to listen to the old man. "What do you know about such things?" they said resentfully. Besides, all the holy books and rabbis and Hasidim said otherwise, and surely they were more reliable than Old Berel.

That the Messiah would come in 5666 was plain. Simple Jews just wanted to know how the Messiah would arrange this coming, and how this business of going to Eretz Yisrael would be managed when all the dead would rise from their graves, and what life would be like in Eretz Yisrael. So they asked my father. Glowing and excited, my father would describe the whole business in passionate words for the crowd in the *bet hamidrash*. He was not quite clear about just how the Messiah would arrive because there were several opinions in the holy writings and he could not determine which was correct. Some holy books said that the Messiah would drop from a large cloud and seat all the Jews upon it and fly to Eretz Yisrael. Others held that everyone would be transported to the Holy Land by a magic carpet or some such miraculous device. But no matter how, it would be done in the twinkling of an eye. The destroyed Temple, which stands intact in Heaven, would immediately drop down in Jerusalem. The divine service with Kohanim and Levites and sacrifices would be restored. All the holy men would come down from Heaven and sit with their crowns on their heads, taking pleasure in the aura emanating from the Divine Presence. And all the Torah would become clear as day to everyone and there would be no more questions and doubts and differences of opinion, because God, Blessed be He, would study the Torah with the Jews.

As he spoke, my father's face shone and his blue eyes gleamed with enthusiasm in the dusky *bet hamidrash*.

I WAS not very satisfied listening to my father. Nor were the simple Jews so overjoyed. Toilworn, despondent, and persecuted, they sought another kind of redemption. They wanted the meat of the Messianic Wild Ox, the wine reserved for the righteous at the Messiah's coming, the gold and silver and precious stones and loaves of finest white bread that would grow on the trees. They wanted Gentile kings, princes, and princesses for their slaves and servants, carriages and horses and music and banquets and long warm days, each day to last thousands of years. The vision of holy men studying Torah with God, a Torah without questions and doubts—that was small reward for their unending suffering and degradation.

"Rabbi, won't there be any wild ox or messianic wine or other good things?" they asked in disappointment.

My father smiled a superior scholarly smile at these simple people who were concerned primarily with physical things, eating and drinking. And he comforted them:

"Of course, of course, there will be everything good," he assured them. "But all that is nothing in comparison to the great spiritual feast of seeing the light of the Divine Presence. It is not even possible to comprehend with our senses how great that enjoyment will be."

The simple Jews, and I among them, relaxed a little. I was willing to exchange with the holy men all their pleasures of studying the Torah and enjoying the aura of the Divine Presence for the pleasure of having a few Gentile slaves who would be afraid of me. After years of insults from the non-Jewish boys, after hearing their taunts and "dirty Jew," after years of fear before watchmen and petty officials, I had a great desire to make them my slaves and show them the glory of Israel. I burned with the desire to revenge myself on the oppressors who tortured old men and women and children in the Jewish cities and towns of Russia.

I was so absorbed in the Messiah's advent that I thought about it night and day. Rocking my little brother to sleep, I would imagine that the cradle was a wagon in which sat my father and mother, my sister and brothers, together with my two dead little sisters who had risen from their graves. I was the driver taking them all to Eretz Yisrael. I would drive the wagon so fast that a few times I overturned the cradle and my baby brother fell out. My mother would look at me with her large gray eyes and declare, with a precautionary epithet, that I must have gone mad. My sister, a dreamer and enthusiast like my father, teased my imagination even more with her stories and suppositions about the sweet life to come any day, when the Messiah's *shofar* would blow continuously for three days and bring the news that the Jews could return to their own land.

During this period some peasants murdered a Jewish couple in the woods. At night they went into the hut of Reb Moishe Kruk, foreman of a lumber camp, and with axes killed him and his wife, quiet, peaceful people who lived like doves. The murderers left footprints and were caught, but the horrible deed terrified all the Jews in our town and the villages around. The fear was so great that one day when a few dozen Russian workers appeared in town, dressed in red shirts, the Jews locked themselves behind their doors, sure that a massacre was to start. Storekeepers who went to Warsaw for merchandise brought back fantastic tales about demonstrations and barricades; about young men and women marching with red flags and singing songs against the Czar; about soldiers bayoneting people in the street; about a girl in a red dress, the leader of the revolutionaries; about queer socialists who buried their dead not in shrouds but in red flags; about unbelievers who said that a man had no soul but only electricity, and when the electricity ran out, the man died; and about other unbelievers who said that the Messiah was not a descendant of David, son of Jesse, but Dr. Theodor Herzl whose followers would lead the Jews to Eretz Yisrael.

Then the Jews in our town would huddle even closer together in the *bet hamidrash* between afternoon and evening services, listening to these weird things, groans and sighs filling the darknesses of God's house.

My father no longer had the least doubt about the Messiah's coming in 5666.

"Jews, these are the sufferings before the coming of the Messiah," he said optimistically. "Just this year to go, and then, God willing, everything will be for the best."

Jews peered at every cloud in the sky, as if it were just about to break open and a voice would call out that the deliverance was at hand.

THE last month of 5666 arrived. The *shofar* blew, but it was not the Messiah's. It was the *shofar* of the *bet hamidrash* on which Reb Boruch Wolf, the official blower, had learned his art.

With every passing day, the tension grew. The year 5666 was coming closer to its end, but the Messiah had not yet appeared. My father, the believer, had not lost hope: there was still time. Any day, any hour, any moment, the Messiah might appear. Each day passed like an eternity. The day before Rosh Hashana, the Jews kept scanning the skies, kept listening to every sound. They believed it might happen, as with dear anticipated guests who have a habit of arriving at the last minute just when one has already given them up, that this, the dearest of guests, the Messiah, would come at the last minute of 5666. Even when they went to the prayerhouse for the afternoon service, the Jews waited for the first three stars to rise, for it would still be 5666 and the great event could still happen.

But the stars rose in the same, everyday sky, and the evening did not look any different from ordinary evenings. In the field near the *bet hamidrash,* Grusky's swineherd drove home his hogs. Everything looked more commonplace and ordinary and humdrum than on other days of Exile. My father gave a last glance at the sky and in a broken voice said to begin the evening service. The *baal-tefilla,* the reader, quaveringly sang "Yea, we will rejoice in the words of thy Law and in thy commandments for ever; for they are our life and the length of our days." And the boys in the congregation spiritedly replied "Ai, ai, ai." But there was no heart in the singing. Nor was there heart in the New Year wishes after the service. Even at home, the apple dipped in honey after the blessing did not have the Rosh Hashana sweetness. The Jews were disappointed, dejected. More than disappointed was my father. He was ashamed: ashamed for his congregation, ashamed for me, for my mother, and for himself.

I was angry and embittered. Gone was Eretz Yisrael, gone Leviathan and the Wild Ox, gone the slaves and servants. Back were the sandy wastes of Leczyna, the littered field near the *bet hamidrash* where the hogs rooted under the care of Grusky's swineherd. Back were the Gentiles and the Gentile boys and their dogs, the enemies of Jewish children.

The cantor in the *bet hamidrash* poured his heart into the "Now, therefore, O Lord our God, impose thine awe upon all thy works," but I no longer believed that God would impose his dread on all the nations and give glory to his people through the son of Jesse, His Messiah, in our days. I thought all kinds of sinful thoughts during the Rosh Hashana benedictions. When it was time for the sounding of the *shofar* and the prayer "May it be thy will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, that these shofar sounds may reach the throne of thy Glory and intercede for us, that all our sins be atoned," I was moved by an evil spirit to do a terrible deed.

This is the story. In the commentary of my prayerbook there was printed a warning at this point to be on guard against pronouncing the name of the Angel of Fire, for if his name be mentioned, the whole world can be destroyed. I had long yearned to speak out the name of this fiery angel. The world was in my hands. I could let it stand as it had stood for five thousand, six hundred, and sixty-six years and a day, or I could destroy it in a second merely by pronouncing the difficult name of the Angel of Fire. In the past I had controlled myself with an iron will. For despite my desire to see how the world would look destroyed, I knew that I too would be among all who would be burned in the conflagration, and I watched my step. But on Rosh Hashana of 5667, my belief in what the holy books said was rather badly shaken. All the holy books had given indications that the Messiah would come and he did not come. Life was no longer as it had been. I took a chance.

Not believing the warning as once I had, I was, nevertheless, still a little afraid. Very softly, so that no one could hear, with fear and curiosity intermixed, I pronounced the name of the Angel of Fire, closing my eyes so as not to see the destruction that might come like a terrible thunderbolt from heaven. I waited, seeing within my closed eyes a flaming redness. When I opened my eyes and saw everything as before, I relaxed, as if I had avoided a fearful catastrophe. I was whole, the Jews in the prayerhouse were whole.

What had once been only scratches of doubt, now became deep fissures. For the first time I looked at the Kohanim while they performed the priestly benediction, though I had been warned against doing so lest I become blind.

After the High Holy Days, bad times came on the town. The autumn rains poured from the leaden skies which lay low and tangled in the clouded trees. Yehoshua Glusker, who, believing in the Messiah's advent, had not cared to repair his roof, now went gloomily to work covering the gaping holes with shingles. Downcast, Jews went to and from the *bet hamidrash.* A profound melancholy hung over Leczyna.

ON THE HORIZON

MENOTTI'S "THE CONSUL"

HEINZ POLITZER

GIAN-CARLO MENOTTI'S "musical drama" *The Consul* has been received with great acclaim. The *New Yorker's* critic, hardly noted for unrestrained enthusiasm, speaks of a "history-making accomplishment" and hails the work as Broadway's "first successful all-out opera." The warmth and enthusiasm of this ovation demonstrate the eagerness of America, the Occident of the 20th century, to catch up with the European continent in every field of culture—even opera.

But opera is a historical form, inseparable from the European social past which molded it. It was nurtured in Baroque, and the European South is its favored scene; it is doubly bound up with Catholicism: with the mystery plays of the Middle Ages, and with the Spanish *autos,* such as Calderon's. It is firmly rooted in the feudal order that collapsed in the year 1789, destroyed by that same freedom which still broods over American democracy. The world of opera, with its gods and heroes, with its basic unreality, with the supernatural, time-suspending gesture of the aria—that "lull in the dramatic storm" (Franz Werfel)—all this is a product of feudal arrogance, all this attests feudal disregard of "the lower classes."

The realistic drama has tried again and again to gain a foothold on the operatic stage: this was part of the bourgeois reaction to the challenge of feudal aristocracy. Gluck in his *Alcestis* had already attempted to turn the operatic form towards greater realism and to overthrow the supremacy of the aria by emphasizing the dramatically accented recitative. Bizet's *Carmen* diverted the romantic passion of "grand" opera style towards an essentially realistic theme. Subsequently the *leitmotif*—a stylistic device typical of the bourgeois rationalism of the 19th century—came into its own in the work of Richard Wagner, whose ironic, psychologized world of gods and heroes constituted an almost scientific reinterpretation of the German mythos.

But opera continually turned back towards musically determined forms of expression. In Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* or Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler,* European opera seeks again to return to its sacral ecstasies and to the aria, that illogical and absurd freezing of the climactic moment.

THE chance for an American opera lies undoubtedly in the area of a middle-class realism directly opposed to the rigid feudal forms of "grand" opera, which owes its origin to a social structure basically in conflict with American life. But Americans in general do not accept the idea of "the stage as a moral institution" (Schiller), but have used the theater primarily as a means of escape from reality—and therefore American opera has made almost no attempt to realize itself.

So far, significantly, nearly all attempts at American opera have been set in the South, that section of America which with its backwardness and autocratic ruling class offers the closest approach to European feudalism. Here, in the relations between white and

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HEINZ POLITZER's discussion of Gian-Carlo Menotti's "musical drama," *The Consul,* now running on Broadway, raises again, in somewhat original terms, the question of whether an "American opera" is possible. Mr. Politzer, who has been a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, is assistant professor of German at Bryn Mawr College. He was born in Vienna in 1910 and came to this country in 1948 after a long stay in Palestine. This article was translated from the German by Ralph Manheim.

black, a small remnant of serfdom survives, while the contrast between the easy, idle life of the upper classes and the smoldering humility of the people echoes the old conflict of Count Almaviva and the lackey Figaro in the Mozart opera.

That is why *Showboat* and *Oklahoma,* not operas to be sure but dramatic operettas with tragic and sentimental emphasis, take place in that American South. And a number of more serious attempts to create a native American opera are bound up with the Negro problem and written for Negro singers: Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess;* Virgil Thomson's burlesque oratorio *Four Saints in Three Acts* to words by Gertrude Stein; and recently Kurt Weill's *Lost in the Stars,* a facile, watered-down version of Alan Paton's novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country,* about the suffering and revolt of the South African Negroes.

IN ITS flight from reality, American operetta, like the American theater generally, does not treat race problems as an area of serious human reality; rather it uses race problems as a *reduction* of general social problems, which are thus made bearable and even pleasant: "It can't happen to us." Or else, as in the work of Tennessee Williams, social problems are reduced to the neurotic fixations of the outsider. Or when they are treated seriously, as by Eugene O'Neill, they remain without significant consequences. Or, as in Thornton Wilder, they are deprived of reality and stylized into legends or fairy tales of "our town" or "our time."

On the other hand, the average American's inborn sense of reality, and his inherited puritanical rejection of pleasure, leisure, and display, make him ill disposed to appreciate the sensual abundance of the European theater, let alone the opera: he is a realist who at bottom refuses to take seriously the means by which he seeks for an hour or so to escape from reality—and thus he makes no serious aesthetic demands. And one who serves time, as he does, can find no pleasure in such an operatic element as the aria, which is a deliberate denial of time. Only his bad conscience, his dread of having missed something significantly European (and this, in passing, is one of the most powerful forces at work in the process of American civilization), is responsible for his desire to produce and possess his own, American opera. But bad conscience is not enough.

Actually, in America opera is essentially a prerogative of those foreign minorities in the big cities that have retained some wisp of longing for the old country. American Jews have had a hand in our semi-operas or pseudo-operas: in the music of Gershwin, Jerome Kern, and Kurt Weill, or in the words of Gertrude Stein. And this is not only because show business is a field that is open to them (and they have made ample use of the opportunity), but also because for the enlightened, emancipated Jews, especially of Central Europe, opera has always served as a kind of substitute for religious worship. And perhaps their own minority status still finds some echoes in the issues involved in operatic stories: some of the situations dealt with in opera may represent for immigrants at least a remote reality, whereas to native Americans, they are simply dead issues. So it happens that the great Broadway successes up to *South Pacific* have reflected the pathetic, sentimental display of the European theater (Ezio Pinza along with Mary Martin) much more often than the reformist realism of the American theater-goer.

Gian-Carlo Menotti's *The Consul* is a product of the Italian minority, and there is no doubt that this Italian American, who is his own librettist and director, has effectively exploited the halo of martyrdom as well as other feelings surrounding the minority.

Menotti calls his opera a "musical drama"—he, too, no longer believes in the future of the lofty European opera. He has an authentic modern subject, too, worthy of serious treatment, and capable of evoking authentic emotion. For his minority theme, as it happens, involves a situation and an issue that historical events have made so central and so crucial that its protagonist, the alien and outsider as refugee (usually symbolized by the Jew), has become the symbol *par excellence* of modern alienated, suffering humanity. But, given his subject, Menotti has done little, in his music, to realize the serious potentialities of an independent and original American opera.

THE action is contemporary: we have lived through it; it consists in the struggle for a visa to the land of freedom, good life, redemption. The visa on his passport has become an indispensable prop in the drama of modern man. W. H. Auden wrote more than ten years ago:

The consul banged the table, and said:
"If you've got no passport, you're officially dead."
But we are still alive, my dear, but we are still alive.

Magda Sorel's husband is a member of the resistance movement in a European police state. The secret police are on his trail. He flees to the mountains and advises his wife to apply to the consulate of an (unnamed) "friendly" state for a visa, and to wait for him in that country. The scene now shifts back and forth between Magda's working-class flat and the consulate. The great adversary, the Consul, remains as invisible as Juarez in Franz Werfel's *Juarez and Maximilian,* the last European play in the true operatic style. He is represented by his secretary, a wheel in the state machinery, a small, cold, faceless pane of glass, impervious to humanity and its preoccupations. The subject of Menotti's opera reveals itself as the destiny of the European Everyman, a worthless bundle of human flesh tossed helplessly about in the backwash of the European crisis.

The drama ends in pity and horror: the wife, put off indefinitely by the secretary, goes home and turns on the gas to prevent her husband from returning to her and thus endangering the fight for freedom. But John, the husband, can bear the separation no longer; he comes home and falls into the hands of the police.

Here we have a banal irony of fate and the wisdom of the sentimental tear-jerker. Menotti avoids any such Kafkaesque denouement to his dramatic involvement as that Magda's visa should have arrived at the very moment when her death destroyed its value. Instead of this, he builds his last act around the dying woman's visions of terror, and draws the dramatic action out interminably. In so doing, however, he enters into the tradition of the essentially Baroque dream play, with its spirits and hocus-pocus. (In the very first act Magda sings a duet with the dream figure of her husband.) It is good, reliable, and utterly obsolete theater.

MUSICALLY *The Consul* partakes of the *verismo* of Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* or *L'Amico Fritz;* it is a semi-successful programmatic rendition of the dramatic action. Added to this, we have Magda's long aria against bureaucracy, the modern tyrant, which is exactly patterned on Tosca's long aria against Police Chief Scarpia—indubitably a late feudal figure. Even the place occupied by this aria is the same as in Puccini—the build-up to the climax of the second act. The logical mechanism of traditional operatic dramaturgy forced Menotti's adroit hand to this cliché.

Modern effects are artificially superimposed: as the curtain rises, the orchestra is silent and a gramophone is playing a popular hit. As it falls, a telephone is ringing. In between, there is the clatter of a typewriter, the heavy tread of the secret police, the hissing of the gas, and the monotony of fear and expectation, translated into tones that are far too euphonious.

In one scene, indeed, Menotti has captured something of the eery twilight that lies over our time. Among those who have come to the consulate in search of protection and freedom is a magician. Not to obtain his visa but merely to have an audience, he performs his great trick before the spellbound machine, the secretary: he hypnotizes his companions in fate, the insulted and injured, and to the sensuous, unreal strains of a sweet, commonplace waltz, they are lulled into the depths of their suppressed longings. This scene has something of the burlesque irony of Jacques Offenbach, of the surrealistic irony of Jean Cocteau, and of the insane irony of modern existence. In it the theater becomes the mirror of an illusion that reflects another, deeper illusion: here the theater becomes truly magical.

The performance, by young and almost entirely unknown singers, was excellent. It achieved a harmony of acting and singing unknown on the European stage and perhaps not even to be desired in a form of dramatic production which to this day retains some memory of the improvised plays of its beginnings. Menotti and his troupe have put an enormous amount of precision-work and imagination into this product of wishful thinking—an American opera. The result is a dazzling misfire.

THE STUDY OF MAN

CHANGING SOCIAL STATUS AND PREJUDICE

The Race Theories of a Pioneering American Sociologist

S. M. LIPSET

IN RECENT years it has been the fashion among American sociologists to belittle or more commonly to ignore the work of the earliest American sociologists, of men like Robert E. Park, Albion Small, C. H. Cooley, Lester F. Ward, and Edward A. Ross. These scholars, many of whom founded the first chairs in sociology at American universities during the first two decades of this century, are often dismissed as simply reporters, reformers, theologians, and philosophers—which is what most of them were, primarily. They began their work at a time when sociology had barely differentiated itself as a study from the more general interest in social problems that has always existed without benefit of a special name or special techniques. And they speculated about man's social life without "going into the field" to undertake empirical studies, using as their data impressionistic and unscientific observations.

The collection and publication of the essays that one of these men, Robert E. Park (1864-1944), wrote over a period of thirty years on race relations and race prejudice,* offers us the opportunity to form a more just view—and makes clear how much we owe to this first generation. Indeed, it becomes apparent that much that we consider peculiarly modern in the understanding of race relations and race prejudice was formulated as long as thirty-seven years ago.

THE present-day concern of American social science with the study of race, the contacts and conflicts between races, and race prejudice, owes much to the influence of a man who is barely known to the general public, the sociologist Robert E. Park. S. M. LIPSET, assistant professor of sociology at the University of California, here sums up Park's views on race, and considers to what extent social science research has supported his pioneer work. Mr. Lipset holds his bachelor's degree from the City College of New York, his doctorate from Columbia University, and taught at Toronto University before taking up his present post in California. His book, *Agrarian Socialism: A Study of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan,* is to be published shortly by the University of California Press.

PARK was professor of sociology at the University of Chicago for many years, and his students now hold some of the most important positions in the field. Originally, however, he was a newspaperman and journalist (he wrote the first articles exposing the exploitation of the natives of the Belgian Congo before the First World War), and, as we learn from an interesting autobiographical note printed in this volume, he thought of himself as a reporter even after he had become a sociologist:

"My interest in the newspaper had grown out of the discovery that a reporter who had the facts was a more effective reformer than an editorial writer who merely thundered from his pulpit, no matter how eloquently.

"According to my earliest conception of a sociologist, he was to be a kind of super-reporter, like the men who write for *Fortune.* He was to report a little more accurately, and in a manner a little more detached than the average . . . the 'Big News.' The 'Big News' was the long-term trends which recorded what is actually going on rather than what, on the surface of things, merely seems to be going on."

However, when we look through this volume, which contains Park's reactions to the

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**Race and Culture,* edited by Everett Hughes, Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois. 425 pp. $5.00.

"Big News" in race relations during his lifetime (he writes about Hawaii, the South, Brazil, and the Pacific Coast), we see that he was more than a super-reporter; he was a keen sociological theorist who made use of sociological conceptions to set forth a large number of significant hypotheses about the operations of the society about him. The fact that he himself did not set up elaborate investigations to test these hypotheses by no means justifies underestimating their influence and continuing importance; to evaluate his work we must rather analyze the extent to which his hypotheses and insights have proved fruitful for latter-day research.

The chief hypotheses on race that underlie his writings, we can see from this volume, form a complete whole. Let us try to crystallize his theory of race as he developed it in these papers

Trying to explain the diversity in the relations between different races, the total range from peace and accommodation to all-out conflict, Park puts forth as his fundamental hypothesis that race prejudice—and class prejudice too—is created when groups or individuals try to resist a change in social organization. Race relations become strained when changes in status constantly take place. Such changes produce conflicts of interest that find a vent in race hostility. Certain individuals and classes rise and invade the higher levels of societies, and the prestige of other individuals and classes is in consequence threatened or falls. In the United States, where changes in the underlying economic conditions take place more rapidly than elsewhere, there are greater changes in social status, threats to it are more prevalent and intense, and there is consequently greater prejudice. The least active prejudice, on the other hand, exists where economic and status positions are fixed, as in a rigid caste society.

From this initial hypothesis, numerous other hypotheses flow. The race prejudice thus aroused serves to restrict free competition among different ethnic groups by arbitrarily ruling out certain occupations. It may be further hypothesized that, since prejudice comes from rather deeper roots than misunderstanding between groups, it will not be dispelled by further knowledge alone. "We hate people because we fear them; because our interests, as we understand them at any rate, run counter to theirs."

Park further believed that peoples of divergent races and cultures can only live peacefully together within the limits of the same economy if there is a division of labor among the various groups: that is, if they do not come into economic competition. It will also help maintain the stability of minority groups if they live in comparative moral or cultural isolation, as the Jews did in the Middle Ages.

Since it is in the city that different racial groups meet as competitors for class and status, race conflict is primarily an urban phenomenon. The money economy of the city characteristically facilitates changes in status, and as a result tension develops between those who have status and those who are attempting to secure it. Race relations are also closely linked to the problem of the merchant and trade. The relation between buyer and seller is one which inevitably breeds suspicion since each is attempting to outwit the other; and psychologically one would prefer to have business relations with strangers, or people one could think of as strangers, since sentiment can be then left out. Perhaps for this reason, among many others, traders have since the days of Athens tended to be foreigners; the Metics in Athens, the Chinese in non-Chinese oriental societies, and the Jews in Europe. The alien merchant has usually had low status, and has been resented by the "natives."

In contemporary society, where the low status group no longer lives in physical or social isolation but tries to advance itself, we have what Park dubbed the "marginal man," the individual who is part of two cultures and therefore not integrated into either. The members of the low status group seek to participate more actively in the social life of the people around them, and by acculturation and assimilation try to achieve recognition as equals of members of the dominant group. "Everything that marks them as strangers —manners, accent, habits of speech and thought —makes this struggle difficult." The phenomenon of self-hatred is an outcome of this struggle for acceptance and equality. "Children acquire the prevailing attitudes in the community by a kind of moral infection, but even adults are not immune, and there are moments when they are not wholly able to overcome that 'sickening sense of inferiority' which overtakes most of us at times; moments when they could say, what members of other racial minorities have sometimes said: 'I hate my race! I hate myself!'"

At the same time, Park sees the race problem as in part a problem of communication among different groups: "Whenever representatives of different races meet and discover in one another

—beneath the differences of race—sentiments, tastes, interests, and human qualities generally that they can understand and respect, racial barriers are undermined and eventually broken down. Personal relations and personal friendships are the greatest moral solvents." And in consequence, he looks for an ultimate improvement to result from the increasing tide of race competition and conflict in the United States. Today many Negroes are moving into business and professional occupations. And while this will initially lead to an intensification of tension and prejudice as the Negro occupational structure approaches that of the whites, bonds of similar interests will develop between Negroes and whites in the same position in the economic structure, and communication and understanding between members of the two groups becomes more likely.

Park sums up his view of the history of race relations in different societies in a simple formula: the relations of races appear to go through a cycle of racial competition, conflict, accommodation, and eventual assimilation.

IT IS clear from this summary that Park had gone far beyond his chosen task of reporting society. He undertook the task of analyzing race relations throughout history, and in different parts of the contemporary world, in order to locate the sociological factors correlating with race prejudice.* And while the results we have summarized may seem in part obvious and not excessively striking, it is important to realize that in 1913, when the first of these essays was written, the conception of race and race relations held by many of the most advanced and sophisticated American thinkers was that expressed in the racist books of Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard—this was later to be brought into the realm of practical politics in the form of the American immigration regulations. Where the racists saw race prejudice as an "instinctive" reaction, where they saw the need to preserve the "purity" of race, Park saw the operation of the historical processes of conflict and accommodation as determined by social causes rather than by anything so mysterious as inborn instinctual reactions. If the climate of opinion on the subject of race has changed in the past forty years in America, certainly a large part of the credit must go to the approach that was developed by Park and his students.

Park's work was, of course, not empirical or objective as these terms are used in modern sociology. Yet, to round out the picture, we should add that much of the work in the field of race relations in the 1920's and early 1930's that now forms one of the most imposing monuments of American empirical sociology, was a result of Park's encouragement to his students to study the background of different racial and ethnic groups. Many of the insights in the studies of men like Louis Wirth, W. I. Thomas, E. V. Stonequist, W. L. Warner, Allison Davis, Donald Pierson, and others, were the result of, explicitly or by indirection, Park's influence. And the more technical empirical sociology of the last fifteen years has time and again verified many of the hypotheses developed in his works.

For example, recent studies have tended to confirm Park's belief that racial prejudice breaks down when individuals work and live together in similar conditions in which they get to know one another as persons and not as stereotypes. Research in housing projects, army units, and the merchant marine, has shown that individuals "forced" to live and work with Negroes begin to drop many of their anti-Negro attitudes. (Thus, Stouffer *et al.* in *The American Soldier*, Volume I, Princeton, 1950, show that the closer the contact between white and Negro soldiers, the less the prejudice among the white soldiers.)

Park's denial of the rational liberal belief in education as the solution to race prejudice has also been validated by sociological and psychological research. It has been shown that anti-prejudice propaganda often activates, rather than weakens, the intolerant sentiments of prejudiced individuals. (This was demonstrated in the study by Eunice Cooper and Marie Jahoda, "The Evasions of Propaganda," *Journal of Psychology*, Volume 23, 1947.) As Park suggested, prejudice fills a real need of the bigoted individual and group and cannot be eliminated "rationally." The competitive social relations which create prejudice must be changed first.

The relation between economic mobility and race prejudice has also been confirmed in recent studies. In the last few years, research on race prejudice has begun to relate prejudice to the variable of personal social mobility, rather than to the given socio-economic position of individuals; and it has been found that a person who is moving upward or downward socially, who is entering or leaving a given status level, is likely to be more prejudiced than a person whose social position is not changing. (This is demonstrated by the study reported in *The Dynamics of Prejudice,* by Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz, Harper, 1950.) One possible explanation for the great deal of working-class anti-Semitism in this country is the fact that American workers are oriented toward climbing up the socio-economic structure. Jean-Paul Sartre has suggested that European workers are less anti-Semitic than American workers because they do not have the American dream of leaving the working class.

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*His conclusions may seem similar to the common Marxist theory asserting that economic relations lie at the root of race prejudice, and indeed there is much in common between them. But we should remember that Park arrived at his conclusions on the basis of a wide experience and knowledge of race relations specifically, and that they did not follow from any general theory.

W. L. WARNER and his associates have developed the more optimistic side of Park's hypotheses about the relation of mobility to prejudice, especially as they relate to the changing position of the Negro in the United States. They have suggested that the "normalizing" of the Negro's economic position will eventually modify anti-Negro stereotypes. (Park's name, one may note, does not appear in Warner's extensive writings as the source of his "class-caste" hypothesis. Everyone agrees that knowledge in the social sciences should be cumulative, but too many social scientists continue to ignore much work which has already been done.)

The concept of the marginal man has also had numerous applications in sociology, psychology, and literature. Much of the current discussion of the "alienation" of minority group members is foreshadowed in Park's early generalizations on this theme.

One major problem suggested in Park's writings which has not yet been treated systematically is the relation between trading occupations as such and ethnic prejudice. It is obvious that there is some relationship. The stereotypes that were held of the Metics in ancient Greece, the Jews in Europe and America, the Armenians in the Near East, and the Chinese in the Orient, all suggest this. The fact that the hostile attitudes toward these minority groups were not solely a product of antagonism toward the alien can be seen in the pre-Civil War feelings about the "Yankee trader" in this country; in many respects, the stereotype of the shrewd, grasping, New England Yankee was similar to that of the Jew. The large-scale cooperative movements which exist today among farmers in the United States and Canada are also a result, in part at least, of the great hostility felt toward "non-producers," the merchants who add to the price without adding to the product.

It is interesting to note, in this connection, that the prairie provinces of Canada—and perhaps those of the North Central United States too—are considerably more anti-Semitic than the country as a whole, in spite of the fact that there are few Jews in these areas. The province of Alberta, for example, is governed by the Social Credit party, many of whose leaders are openly anti-Semitic, while Coughlin received his greatest electoral support in North Dakota. These farm areas of the Wheat Belt have the largest rural cooperative movement in the world, and are politically against the middleman and the banks. Their anti-Semitism would then appear to be a result of identifying Jews with middlemen; attacking "the Jews," therefore, may often be another form of attacking the commercial and credit system.

Park's suggestion that societies prefer "aliens" in middlemen occupations, so they may be attacked more freely, and indeed the whole question of the nature and sources of anti-middleman attitudes, are worthy of further research.

THERE is one significant gap in Park's writings on race relations, and that is his inadequate treatment of Jews and anti-Semitism. This, however, does not seem to be due to any lack of interest on his part. Park himself did everything that he could to stimulate research on the Jews in the United States. On a number of occasions, he referred to the Jews as the most interesting ethnic group in the country, and even urged that the study of Jewish history be introduced into the public school system. That there is no significant sociology of the American Jew seems not to be a fault of Park's, but of Park's students, and of American sociologists of Jewish descent in general.

Why, one may wonder, did not any of them, except Louis Wirth, take up the Jew or anti-Semitism as a subject for investigation? It is possible that part of the answer may well lie in Park's theory of the effect of social mobility as applied to the Jew. Are not most Jewish sociologists "marginal men," seeking to escape the stigma of being Jewish by becoming part of the universal community of scholars? Might not they feel that studying the "Jewish problem" would doom them forever to an inferior status as "Jewish" Jews? This is all the more a pity because Park's theories seem particularly appropriate for the study of attitudes towards American Jews: their unique social mobility and rapid advancement would appear to have the effect, in line with his theories, of increasing social conflict and activating prejudice.

The major weakness in Park's writings on race relation lies perhaps in his assumption that they are subject to inevitable cycles. He believed that either assimilation on the one hand or a caste system on the other must eventually result from coexistence within one culture and state of different ethnic groups. The history of the Jews in the Diaspora is, however, as Park recognized, a significant exception to this generalization. Park never demonstrated that different cultural and racial groups, maintaining cultures that were separate to some degree, could not live in harmony and cooperation over very long periods of time, And indeed, by their very nature, hypotheses about the inevitability of cycles, whether they be cycles of race relations or of the rise and fall of civilization, are not testable at all. Worse, they serve a negative function by suggesting that men cannot affect their own history.

There is, however, little need in this article to discuss those elements of Park's work which have not met the test of later investigations. It is more important to remind the new, more "empirical" crop of sociologists that all that was written before the invention of the IBM sorter is not useless. Robert Park was a keen analyst of society, who brought to bear on the problems in which he was interested the insights of European, especially German, social theory. One hopes that the republication of his writings will revive an interest in his work, both as a source of fruitful hypotheses for future research, and as a model of that kind of writing by social scientists which requires no other justification beyond that provided by its intrinsic intelligence and understanding, and the enlightenment it may offer to others.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Loyalties Legitimate and Illegitimate

To the Editor of Commentary:

Thank you for publishing the two illuminating articles on Zionism by Dorothy Thompson and Oscar Handlin. It appears that Dorothy Thompson once held the identical views which Handlin now so logically presents and defends.

On November 1, 1943, Miss Thompson delivered an address at Carnegie Hall in New York. Part of the speech was published in *New Palestine* in the issue of November 12, 1943. In this speech Miss Thompson criticized and condemned the assimilationist tendencies of Reform Judaism. "It is curious to me that nationhood of the Jews should be denied by Jews themselves. . . . 'But the Jews are no nation'—said by Jews. What are they? Why do those who deny their nationhood call themselves Jews? We are, they say, a religion. But of what is that religion the expression? Can any Jew who celebrates the festivals and rituals of his religion deny that his is the religion of a specific people, whose ethos, practices, prohibitions, and laws have grown out of a specific and unique experience? Judaism is the religion of the Jews. That is its very name! . . . What are a people, if they are not a nation? . . . No nation, not one, has shown such remarkable tenure of life under the most disadvantageous of circumstances as have the Jews. . . . And how any Jew can divorce his religion from his nationhood is beyond my powers of comprehension." Thus spoke Miss Thompson in 1943.

Miss Thompson has misread the history of the Jewish Enlightenment. Most of the leaders were disillusioned regarding assimilation and like Herzl became proponents of nationalism. In 1943 Miss Thompson supported the orthodox Jewish view of nationalism but in her article in Commentary she repudiates it.

Her identification of *Civitas Dei* with the radical Reform movement among Jews and Christian Protestants is unfortunate. The idea originated in neither group, but in the mind of a Roman Catholic theologian, Augustine, who wrote a book on the subject. In it he spiritualized the meaning of the word "Israel" and applied it to the Church. This spurious spiritualizing tendency has been damaging to Christian and Jewish theology. The dogmatic concept of Augustine is behind Roman Catholic opposition to the State of Israel and the prime reason for its espousal of internationalization for Jerusalem. The Church of Rome considers herself the "true Israel of God."

Mr. Handlin is right when he says: "The position of Israel with regard to Jewish Americans is then entirely similar to the position of Italy and Ireland with regard to Italian and Irish Americans." The same view was expressed by Miss Thompson in 1943 when she spoke of Jews and Irishmen. She concluded: "No one doubts their rights as Americans, but no one finds the slightest discrepancy between this and the right of a free Ireland to exist."

While I fully agree with Mr. Handlin in his fine presentation of his side, I also appreciate the fine work of Miss Thompson in her championing of human liberty and her noble defense of Jews against all forms of despotism. I am sure she will eventually resolve her apparent difficulties on the question of Zionism.

Elias Newman

Carmel Institute
Minneapolis, Minnesota

To the Editor of Commentary:

I have read the articles by both Dorothy Thompson and Oscar Handlin in your March issue, and your editorial notes on both. It appears to me that you accept Mr. Handlin's article as an answer to Miss Thompson's fears, but while he does lift the onus of divided allegiance from a few of the charges Miss Thompson brings, by and large he substantiates the very charges that Miss Thompson brings against us by way of some of our leaders.

I believe it should be made increasingly clear to the Gentile public, as well as to Israeli and Zionist leaders, that while they may speak for Israeli citizens, they do not and cannot speak for American Jews.

Our first and only allegiance is to the United States; the assistance we pour out to Zionism and Israel comes from a desire to help our fellow Jews to live a better life. If a political state helps them attain this goal, as we believe it does, we desire to assist them in any honorable manner to attain that goal of political independence. But we do not owe allegiance to

Zionism or to Israel because of this assistance, and we cannot allow Mr. Ben Gurion, as fine a human being as he may be, to even imply that we do. If some of the radicals in the Zionist organization do not tone down their utterances, I for one will be forced to resign my inactive membership in that organization.

I voice this protest, not because of fear of what may happen to American Jewry, but because, as both Miss Thompson and Mr. Handlin state, American Jews are an integral part of this country and cannot and should not be separated from it by those who have no right to speak for them.

Louis Wolfberg
South Bend, Indiana

To the Editor of Commentary:

The aim of American Zionists is to help establish in Palestine a Jewish national home. The American Jews who helped to build Israel did no more than to extend the Marshall Plan to Israel. The bugaboo of double loyalty has been orated and debated for years. But why was it directed only against Jews? There are Irish people here who helped in the establishment of a free Ireland and they were not questioned as to their loyalty. If at this late date Commentary sees fit to debate this question, then this journal is still in knee pants and is journalistically immature. . . . Would you have thought of bringing to your readers a discussion of the question of whether "white supremacy" or "civil rights" is the better way of life? It is just as outmoded and immature to debate the loyalty of the American Jews. . . .

Betty Ravin
Newark, New Jersey

To the Editor of Commentary:

Since Miss Thompson makes it clear that there are tolerable and socially useful religious and cultural loyalties that in no way conflict with the concept of undivided national loyalty, I should judge that her contribution would have been more accurately entitled "America Demands a Single *National* Loyalty."

Interesting as the retort by Professor Handlin is, it seems to me that it fails to come to grips with Miss Thompson's analysis. Again the subtitle of his article is revealing: "External Ties Are Not *Necessarily* Dangerous." To this, Miss Thompson would probably agree. But it would not follow that there are not external ties that can be, and are, dangerous to American society. At any rate it was to those that Miss Thompson directed attention.

A major part of Professor Handlin's answer is thus altogether irrelevant to Miss Thompson's thesis. Several pages are devoted to proving that there "are legitimate differences of opinion on foreign policy and that the most effective way of resolving these differences is through open debate." This is developed by Professor Handlin at considerable length as if Miss Thompson supported a contrary view; which of course she does not and never has done. What Professor Handlin overlooks is that beyond the differences we have and always will have in advocacy of national policy—differences that are normal and tolerable because they derive from an unqualified and single American national concern—there may be and are others that have no such derivation. Surely there is a difference between the pre-war isolationist whose patriotic motivation was unquestioned, and the Nazi camp-follower who in his advocacy of an American foreign policy that would permit Germany to dominate Europe was clearly a traitor. To ignore that distinction—difficult though it be to determine motives—is to miss the point of Miss Thompson's article, and to overlook a problem of our democratic society that is of growing importance. . . .

Professor Handlin concludes his article with the statement that "the Jews of this country maintain an interest and, through their government, act in behalf of those across the seas, in Israel and elsewhere, to whom they feel particular ties of brotherhood along with those that bind them to all men. Such action and such motives are wholly creditable and wholly American."

This would be a significant statement in the debate with Miss Thompson if it could in any way be demonstrated that she holds any other point of view. As I read her article, she does no such thing. . . . Miss Thompson's point is that there are aspects of the program of Zionism that go far beyond mere "maintenance of an interest"; or that seek to carry on an *independent* political foreign policy, not one "through their government"—for instance, the clandestine shipment of arms despite our federal laws and our position in the United Nations. . . .

To have done justice to Miss Thompson's analysis, Professor Handlin would have had to deal explicitly with, for example, her quotation from the *New Palestine,* an official organ of official American Zionism, as follows: "From the minute the Jewish State was proclaimed we are constrained from taking any political action in regard to Israel without the approval of the Jewish State." Nowhere does Professor Handlin ever refer to this official Zionist statement, or to others like it, or to the subtle process of indoctrination that assumes this as axiomatic. Can he defend it as conforming to his concept of the expression of "legitimate differences of opinion"?

The nub of the matter is precisely whether the attitude revealed in this quotation is a wholesome one for the American nation; whether it is free from the "obstinacy" and "prejudice" which, according to Professor Handlin, are properly to be regarded as dangerous; whether it is an instance of an open clash of opinion, essential to the democratic process. Any policy can be rationalized as designed to serve American national interests. Is that claim to be the only test —not of merit, but of honesty of purpose?

Another illustration of what I regard as the essence of Miss Thompson's thesis which Professor Handlin overlooks is in the question of emigration to Israel, or *halutziut*. "If an individual," says Professor Handlin, "feels that his chances for self-fulfillment are greater outside the United States than in it, we shall be only the gainers by allowing him to seek his opportunities wherever he may find them." I don't know Miss Thompson's views on the subject; but again, from my reading of her article, I should judge that she would agree with this statement, as I do.

However, the picture Professor Handlin draws does not in any way conform to the reality of the proposals for emigration from the United States to Israel. The existence of a planned program to stimulate emigration is a different thing from an individual's acting by his own impulse. Such an emigration is not based upon an individual's self-awareness of his special opportunity for greater self-fulfillment. It is rather a program based on a national mystique, of which the talk of a "pioneering movement dedicated to the furtherance of humanitarian ethics" is transparent sugar-coating.

American Jews who are urged to go to Israel are so urged because Israel needs manpower (particularly Westernized influences), military power, and technical skills for its own national security. Jews who are urged to go to Israel are offered the theory that only there can they live a full life as Jews. Such a program and such a rationale are, it seems to me, far from a harmless striving of an individual for greater self-fulfillment. They do impinge upon the question of primary national loyalty; and they do cultivate a concept of America as a society in which a Jew *cannot* fulfill himself fully, *because* he is a Jew.

Unfortunately, it is easy to obscure the nature of the problem or the degree of its seriousness by referring to elements whose views seem to justify Miss Thompson's alarm as "weak" and "powerless." COMMENTARY would render a fine service if it brought to its readers' attention the official utterances on these subjects by leaders of the Zionist movement in America, which can hardly be described as a "powerless" body. A review of the official statements which are revealing of intent even though they are later called "unauthorized," and, even more, an appraisal of the Jewish nationalist philosophy and of its compelling realities, might give even Professor Handlin as much concern as they do Miss Thompson.

SIDNEY WALLACH

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The articles by Dorothy Thompson and Oscar Handlin were interesting, if a trifle exasperating. I wonder whether Miss Thompson's fears really are "of enough currency among others to call for serious discussion," to quote Mr. Handlin. She does not say so, but I can attribute Miss Thompson's alarm only to the possibility that she thinks Israel might align itself with the Soviet Union in the event of war between the latter and us. The idea of such an alignment seems preposterous, but even granting so remote a possibility, I do not know any American Jews whose first loyalties would not be with the United States. Time enough, in any case, to consider the problem of subversive Jews when and if it ever arises. Why cross so perilous and remote a bridge now? Jews have enough *real* troubles.

JANE K. SCHWARTZ

Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It seems to me that Miss Thompson is unduly perturbed, but she unquestionably voices the doubts of a certain segment of our population. I cannot help echoing her feeling when it comes to ceremonies which involve "American Jewish children taking oaths to the Star of David flag." Such expressions of sympathy and enthusiasm, while not unnatural, seem to me misguided, and may have deplorable consequences. Those responsible should realize the danger of fostering allegiance to a foreign power, which is implied in their act, however well-intentioned.

As to Professor Handlin, he has made a valuable contribution in his calm, clear, and dispassionate discussion of the always intricate and emotionally charged problems of loyalty. His remarks should prove reassuring to Miss Thompson, who has apparently overlooked some of the points he raises.

I think that COMMENTARY has performed a public service in opening its pages to these discussants.

SENTA RYPINS

Israel Education Committee
National Council of Jewish Women
New York City

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Reform Judaism Today

As a Mighty Stream. By Julian Morgenstern. The Jewish Publication Society of America. 442 pp. $4.00.

Reform Judaism: Essays by Hebrew Union College Alumni. Hebrew Union College Press. 288 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by Israel Knox

It is the special merit of Dr. Morgenstern's book that he attempts to redefine the meaning of peoplehood in Judaism and in Jewish history. It is the governing theme in this volume of essays and it also binds them together. Dr. Morgenstern's scholarship is unimpeachable and his interpretations have the quality of originality about them; he is also a writer of parts.

Dr. Morgenstern does not confuse peoplehood with nationhood; on the contrary, he affirms the distinction between them. Nationhood is inseparable from a state and is rooted in geography; a nation is wedded to space. Peoplehood is a matter of memory and mission, and involves a sense of history and a sense of destiny; a people is wedded to time. It is Dr. Morgenstern's conviction that the greatest of the prophets in the greatest crisis of ancient Israel relinquished nationhood, with its temporary and precarious triumphs, for peoplehood, with its promise of eternity. Israel has been and always will be a people, while the nation-empires of Assyria and Babylonia and Persia and Rome and the others, are dust and ashes. Israel is a people, and not a congregation of individuals, and it is as a people that it is a "light unto the nations" and the herald of the Messianic era.

With skill and lucidity Dr. Morgenstern delineates the portrait of Israel as a people and Judaism as its religion. In the Babylonian exile, no longer on its own soil, the Jewish community was compelled to think of itself as a people rather than a nation. Earlier, Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah had prophesied doom, but Jeremiah spoke with hope of the community outside Judea and referred to the Palestinian community as "a basket of rotting figs." It was, however, deutero-Isaiah who proclaimed Israel to be a universal people and Israel's God a universal God, a God of all the earth and a God of history. Thereafter, within Judea and without, it was peoplehood—rather than nationhood—and Torah, the law of God, rather than a state and the rule of kings, that lighted up Israel's path in history. Twice the Jews had been a nation with a state of their own and now they are a nation for a third time, but always they have been a people, and the concept of peoplehood is the more inclusive one. This is primary: both nationalism and universalism (as apart from peoplehood) have been secondary in Israel's long history, and particularism has been tertiary.

Dr. Morgenstern rediscovers and redefines the meaning of peoplehood for Reform Judaism, and yet one wonders if Reform Judaism's quest is at an end. Dr. Morgenstern is at home in Judea and in Babylonia and in all the ancient and medieval lands where Israel lived and suffered and hoped, but his journey does not take him beyond the Renaissance. After that, we are informed, several centuries of darkness descended upon the Jews as they were huddled into Europe's ghettos, and they produced naught of universal worth—not even a single outstanding poem.

Here then, the standard is no longer a Jewish one, and Jewish life is no longer seen from *within,* but from without, from the viewpoint of the world. The life within the ghetto, the centuries of extraordinary inner creativity in Eastern Europe, the spiritual miracles of Vilna (the Jerusalem of Lithuania) and Warsaw, the emergence of communities that approximated the ideals of the prophets—all that is seen as a sad and sterile interlude in Jewish history. It is thus not strange that some Reform rabbis (like many of their Conservative and Orthodox brethren) are subordinating Judaism, as a religion, to nationalism, as the cult of statehood. They are doing so because peoplehood, as envisaged by Reform Judaism, does not always have sufficient substance and relevance.

The pity is all the greater, because Reform Judaism *is* making a contribution, and may yet make a decisive one, to the shaping of America's Jewish community. As depicted by Dr. Morgenstern, it possesses both breadth and depth, as when he writes of Israel's election as a witness to the nations and as the partner that Christianity must not eschew if the world is to be saved. There is no doubt that Reform Judaism is in the tradition of the prophets, and that it can be a way of life. But a way of life, *derech,* must be implemented, must be filled out with, a style of life, *nusach.* And a style of life cannot be voted by resolution at a conference. It is at once far more elusive and far more concrete, and it must contain, as it were, *lacrimae rerum,* the tears and laughter of generations, the *yiches,* the sanctity of pertinent tradition.

Now when and where in its history, outside the boundaries and without the coercions of a state, has Jewry carved out for itself a mode of life, a *nusach,* as concrete and as universal as that embodied in the communities of Eastern Europe's "ghettos"? The word "ghetto," as sometimes used by American Jews sounds hollow, and only its deplorable aspects are stressed. It may even be conceded that the ghetto had a style of life, but its social and spiritual ethos is overlooked for the beards and skullcaps that our fathers wore. We forget that out of the "ghetto" arose also a Jewish revolutionary movement in Czarist Russia and a literature in Yiddish) that has kinship with Reform Judaism at least in one respect—in its profound concern (in Peretz, Leivick, Einhorn, Boraisha, Leyeless, and others) with the Messianic dream, with the redemption of Israel and all mankind.

Reform Judaism should not — must not — diminish or impoverish its universalism, but it stands in need of history, of an experience, and a style. It must absorb and transform the history and experience of the last three centuries and use them as the material out of which to fashion a style of life in America with our own history and experiences as its content. That may be difficult, but, as Spinoza knew, "all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare."

REFORM JUDAISM is a noteworthy volume. It consists of thirteen essays, written by rabbis, alumni of Hebrew Union College, on the occasion of its seventy-fifth anniversary. What is surely commendable is the candor with which these rabbis look at the present condition of Reform Judaism.

These essays are, in effect, a *heshbon hanefesh,* a searching of the heart; and the topics discussed range from Rabbi Olan's "Rethinking the Liberal Faith" and Rabbi Leipziger's "What Has Liberal Judaism to Offer America?" to Rabbi Freehof's "Reform Judaism and Prayer" and Rabbi Beryl Cohon's "Conservative and Reconstructionist Judaism as Seen by a Reform Rabbi."

Reform Judaism has been described by some as rationalistic, cosmopolitan, and optimistic, as an "easy" religion. This description is not adequate and not wholly fair, and it is to the credit of these writers that they are neither resentful nor apologetic, while admitting that there is some truth in the "indictment."

In a superb essay, Rabbi Levi A. Olan deals with this "indictment," and he deals with it in a larger setting. He takes the measure of some current trends in religious thought—those associated with the names of Karl Barth, Berdyaev, the neo-Thomists, and Martin Buber. Although he regards them as unwholesome, he does not reject all their insights, and is quite critical, too, of that religious liberalism which has remained unaffected by the demonic forces let loose in our own age.

Rabbi Olan limits himself to stating and analyzing the issues. And now the question is: can Reform Judaism remain what it is—liberal and humanistic—and yet again the "dimension of depth"? This much is surely true: it cannot be done unless Reform Judaism—or any other variant of Judaism—is ready to abandon a scorn for "metaphysics," an accommodation of religion to the conveniences of the day. What has happened in Europe should have shaken us to the roots of our being, and it is no disparagement of Israel and no blindness to the historical importance of the establishment of a Jewish state to say that it is a joy incommensurate with the infinite tragedy that has befallen us. And so there are celebrations—as perhaps there should be—of the anniversary of the establishment of Israel, but there is no day of mourning, no *yortseit,* for the six millions who have perished.

Here, too, Reform Judaism must turn to the "ghetto," to the millions that died (and we might have been among them), must gather and cherish every document and diary out of

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the concentration camps, every chronicle and song. And then, with these to aid us, all of us must rethink and relive the epic of Israel in the world, must reread and re-examine Genesis and Job and the Prophets and the Book of Psalms for the "dimension of depth." We have perhaps neglected this dimension in our legitimate preoccupation with "scholarship" in these fields. But what was legitimate before Treblinka is trivial now.

It is not possible in a brief review to consider all the essays in this volume.

Rabbi Freehof's "Reform Judaism and Prayer" is both scholarly and thoughtful. He succeeds in appraising the social and aesthetic "functions" of prayer without disregarding its "metaphysical" character and meaning, nor its "sense of mandate," of *mitzvah;* and he does not omit to locate Jewish prayer in the total picture of Judaism's continuity and evolution.

Rabbi Beryl Cohon's "Conservative and Reconstructionist Judaism" is a solid analysis and critique from the standpoint of a Reform rabbi. He is not quite certain whether Conservative Judaism, in its linkage of Judaism with Palestine and Hebrew, can escape the degrading influence of nationalist tribalism. It will not do to scoff him out of court. His version of Conservative Judaism may be one-sided; but if it is, it is worthy of an earnest refutation. And recent tendencies in the Jewish community appear to confirm some of Rabbi Cohon's fears and doubts. He also puts the scalpel to Reconstructionism and exposes the contradictions inherent in the notion of a Jewish civilization (Palestine-centered) within American civilization, and sums it up with the trenchant comment that "while our bodies are in the west, our minds would have to be in the east." Rabbi Cohon is wary of Reconstructionism's plea for a *kehillah,* since it would entail, despite our best intentions, a compulsive discipline; on the other hand, he is more "traditionalist" than the Reconstructionists in retaining the doctrine of the Chosen People, and asserts that their rejection of it follows from a non-Jewish interpretation (whereas the Jewish interpretation is simply that Israel is the "eternal witness to the Eternal"). His final charge is that Reconstructionism is busy "with small change" rather than with the prophetic ideals.

Rabbi Cohon's analysis of Reconstructionism is on a high level, and Reconstructionists will probably pay heed to it. However, one might be prompted to ask how small is the "small change"—how is the term to be defined? And again, can there be *derech,* a way of life, without *nusach,* a style of life? Reconstructionism's "small change" may turn out to be the beginning of some "style of life," an American *nusach.* And that would be a matter of signal importance. The heart of Rabbi Cohon's criticism would lie then in the first part—that is, if Reconstructionism's premises are wrong or invalid, then its *nusach* will fail us. But in its quest for *nusach,* it is unassailable, and Reform Judaism might take a leaf from its book.

Reform Judaism in America is almost a century old. It was in 1846 that Isaac M. Wise arrived in America, and it was under his leadership that the Union of American Hebrew Congregations was founded in 1873, and the Hebrew Union College opened its doors in 1875. Reform Judaism in America has been "experimental" and it has gone a long way in modifying its program and enriching its philosophy. These two volumes are evidence that its philosophy is not a "closed system," that its "postulates" are not beyond criticism, that in listening to the voice of the present it has caught something of Judaism's eternal values. Reform Judaism has apprehended the *why* of Jewish destiny. Its task now is to implement the *why* with the *how* of Jewish existence. It must pass on from *derech* to *nusach.*

Marxism Through the Looking Glass

The Coming Defeat of Communism. By James Burnham. John Day. 278 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by Richard H. S. Crossman

In previous books, James Burnham has revealed a new insight into the factors of modern industrial society which Communist theoreticians still obstinately overlook. In the sense that a modern biologist is still a Darwinian, though he may have discarded practically all of Darwin's special theories, Mr. Burnham is still a Marxist, although—or is it because?—he is now an ideological anti-Communist.

Marx's contribution to world science lay in his new, dialectical approach to politics, the attempt not merely to analyze social change in terms of economic forces, but to see ideas, moralities, and persons as expressions of a dialectical process in history. To become free men, we must discover our slavery; to release our will power, we must see the enemy in all his vast strength, and yet believe that an inevitable world development will give us victory over him. It is highly significant that, in his latest book, after outlining a policy which is beyond the capacities of the Western democracies, Mr. Burnham concludes with a chapter headed "The Inevitability of Communist Defeat." Marx's writings a hundred years ago contained the same emotional contradiction. Over hundreds of pages he would catalogue the complex power, the ruthless cunning, the implacable hostility of the capitalist enemy, and prophesy darkly the inevitable world clash between this monstrous demon and an almost defenseless proletariat. Then, almost casually at the end, his readers would be informed that the proletariat was bound to win.

Now the wheel has come full circle. With Communism in the ascendant, it is Anti-Marx who paints the detailed and pessimistic picture of the strength of the enemy, and adds the apocalyptic assertion that he must inevitably be overcome. I cannot help feeling that Mr. Burnham's picture of the Russian Communist system—controlled by politicians far superior to our own, relentless in its constant offensive for world domination, and completely faultless in its methods of crushing its opponents—may be as over-rationalized as Marx's picture of Victorian capitalism, and for the same reason. History is bound to seem catastrophic and apocalyptic if you attribute all the successful consequences of your opponents' actions to their conscious, rational purposes, and all the disappointments of your own side to human frailty.

It is unnecessary to recapitulate here Mr. Burnham's picture of the Communist conspiracy. As in previous books, he portrays the men of the Kremlin in superhuman guise, as unerring Titans of world revolution, detested by all the peoples they have enthralled. It is a picture to which anyone is thoroughly accustomed who read the Communist-inspired anti-fascist literature about the Nazis which flooded the bookshops in the 1930's. In those days one was in danger of immediately being dubbed an appeaser if one suggested either that the machinery of German totalitarianism was not perfectly coordinated or that the German people did not hate and detest it. The two delusions of Western democracy today are (1) an over-simplification and exaggeration of the strength of the

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Kremlin, and (2) an over-simplification and exaggeration of the strength of popular resistance to it. Everything which Mr. Burnham writes goes to strengthen these delusions. But the fact is that, so long as it works tolerably efficiently, the vast majority of human beings come to terms with whatever social system they live in; and, outside the Atlantic area, I can see no reason to predict strong popular movements against Communist governments which (in China, for instance) are probably actually improving the material conditions of the people. Nationalism, as we have seen in the case of Tito, is still a far stronger motive of political action than social justice, because it stirs the passions of the ruling class and gives to it a motive for rousing the masses to revolt. If there is one reason for believing that the Communist empire may disintegrate without a war, it is the evidence now available that the Kremlin has not learnt the lesson of the American Revolution and is unwilling to grant to the rulers of its satellites "dominion status."

Here we come to the central defect of Mr. Burnham's anti-Marxism. He believes that we can only combat the Kremlin by accepting the main dogma of its philosophy. We must believe that the third world war has already begun, and that there is no basis for a settlement between democracy and Communism other than a surrender whose terms—as he outlines them—are so severe that it would in fact be unconditional. By definition, Americanism and Communism are in a state of permanent war and, by definition, Communism must be inevitably defeated.

This sort of anti-Communist dogma, if accepted, would be as destructive of democracy as Communism itself. To assume that war is inherent in the world today, that international problems can only be solved by the application of physical or psychological *force majeure,* that "the question where and when to shoot is a matter of expediency"—all this is to deny that morality has any place in world politics, so long as the Communist enemy exists. This was precisely the view that inspired Hitler to invade Russia "in self-defense," and that equally inspires Communist expansion.

Let us forget, however, this cardinal objection to Mr. Burnham's theory and study his practical proposals on their merits. His thesis in this book is that the only way to avoid a shooting war is for America to launch a political warfare offensive against the Soviet empire. I agree with him that the military containment of Communism is a ridiculous notion. You cannot follow the Roman example, build a wall around the frontiers of civilization and put soldiers on it to keep the Cominform barbarians out. As he rightly observes, it is all the more futile to attempt to do so because, in the immediate future, a military defeat is the remotest danger that America faces. But is it correct to conclude from this that we must fight the Russians with their own weapons, and organize an anti-Cominform to fight the Cominform?

I happen to have spent the last war conducting political warfare against the enemy, and I must admit that Mr. Burnham's proposals remind me of countless papers submitted by ardent amateur political warriors who conceived that para-military activities could be a substitute for victory in the field. They cannot. If, as Mr. Burnham incessantly repeats, the third world war has already begun, then it will remain a phony war—so far as America and Britain are concerned—until the armies start moving. For a Western democracy can only conduct political warfare successfully when the "shooting war" has passed from the defensive to the offensive stage. The reason is simple. Any Nazi or Communist government which is prepared to be totally ruthless can suppress a resistance movement, or at least localize it in the mountains and forests. A guerrilla army, in order to survive in a totalitarian state, must know that help is on the way, and its rising must be timed to coincide with the military offensive of its external allies. The Warsaw rising is the classical illustration of what happens when the army, for political reasons, does not arrive in time. What is the good of promoting a revolution in Bulgaria, Lithuania, or Czechoslovakia, unless American and British armies are ready to take over on the day of the rising?

In advising us, therefore, to fight the Communists with their own weapons, Mr. Burnham is guilty of the sin of abstraction; he neglects the *content* of democracy. At one point in his argument, he observes that in America it is the military mind which understands the Communist problem. What this really means is that the soldier, who thinks in terms of war and sees diplomacy in military terms, to that extent resembles a Communist. But surely it is the Communist transformation of diplomacy into warfare to which we, as democrats, are opposed. If the President permitted the chiefs of staff to usurp the functions of the State Department in order to organize an anti-Cominform in Europe, the case for European neutrality would become unanswerable. The Atlantic Pact, for instance, instead of being an alliance of free nations, would degenerate into an instrument of American imperialism, and the European would have every reason to renounce it.

In discussing the organization of anti-Communist activity, Mr. Burnham writes, "It is necessary to get to know individual German workers of ability and individual activists in the labor movement at the lowest as well as the highest levels. To those with whom discussion and cooperation are possible, adequate material support should be given." Let me assure him that the establishment in Germany of an organization of paid American agents would not strengthen the cause of Western democracy. The two reasons why German trade unionists are fighting the Communists, although the desperate economic situation demands a united front of all the workers, are (1) the fact that the German Communist party is the hireling of a foreign power, and (2) the equal and opposite fact that the United States does not use such imperialist methods. The American action in the Italian elections, to which Mr. Burnham refers with approval, was at the very least a dubious policy. If it were taken as a precedent for the formation of an American-subsidized anti-Cominform, the effect on relations between Europe and America would be disastrous.

The only moral force which can destroy the Communist empire is national resistance. Mr. Burnham fails to see this, because he believes that the choice for our generation is a world empire run from Moscow or a world empire run from Washington. But any American bid for world domination—even if it posed as an anti-Communist alliance—would fail much more speedily than the Communist crusade, because it would not even have the dynamic of a social gospel. An anti-Communist world state, dominated by a United States which had accepted Mr. Burnahm's philosophy, would be as repellent as, and vastly less efficient than, a Communist world state.

It is fortunate that no responsible American spokesman has so far shown any inclination to take Mr. Burnham seriously. Far too many Europeans already believe that American imperialism is really just as methodical and ruthless as Russian imperialism, and that there is

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nothing to choose between the two. The only effect which the publication of *The Coming Defeat of Communism* could have in Europe would be to confirm this view, and intensify a defeatism which is already dangerously strong. To the thoughtful reader, however, Mr. Burnham provides a useful *reductio ad absurdum* of Marxism through the looking glass.

Elegy for a Lost World

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S. By ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL. With wood engravings by Ilya Schor. Henry Schuman. 109 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by IRVING KRISTOL

AMONG the many Hasidic tales that Dr. Heschel finds occasion to relate in this very poignant—and very beautifully produced—memoir of East European Jewry, there is one on page eighty that is my favorite. It tells of the poor *melamed* (teacher) who, while trudging a wintry road, is invited into the coach of the richest man in town. After covering himself with warm woolen blankets and partaking, at his host's invitation, of brandy, cake, and roast goose, the *melamed* turns to the rich man and asks: "Tell me, please, what are your worldly pleasures?" The rich man, astonished, asks whether his coach and horses and fine food are not sufficiently pleasurable. "No," says the *melamed*, "these are your heavenly pleasures, the acme of your pleasures, but what are your this-worldly pleasures?"

This radical confusion of universes can be found in non-Jewish thinkers, too, but it is only in Judaism that the confusion is the religion itself. To be more exact, it is the Jew himself. The Jew is a citizen of the other-world, which may be located at the beginning or the end of time, but nowhere between the extremes. In the world-as-it-is, he journeys a stranger, finding this world, in some indefinable way, to be something abstract and incomplete, a dream perhaps, or a delusion, a fragment of a morality play, or a great temptation—but, in any case, never fully accessible. There is a—both absurd and sublime—transvaluation of values that is the essence of Jewishness, an incorrigible stumbling out of the window into a more real world, not—it must be emphasized—into a merely spiritual world, but into one simply more real, though nonexistent.

This metaphysical tragi-comedy is enacted, with equal facility, by mystics, rationalists, skeptics, liberals, socialists, and physicists—by Moses de Leon, Maimonides, Spinoza, and Hermann Cohen, Kafka and Sholom Aleichem, Rathenau, Marx, and Einstein. The accent can shift from the gay (Chagall's sketches, where the yoke of the Law has been transformed into a pair of wings) to the bleak (Kafka's *The Trial*, where the Law murders senselessly), or it can remain in tense suspension (Sholom Aleichem's irony). More often than not, a self-deception is involved: the Hasid believes that he is sanctifying the world-as-it-is when he is not even living in it, and a certain type of business man prides himself on his "materialism," which is but a wracking hunger for a material world he is always falling out of. For some Jews the real world is in the other-world of the original Garden, in the beginning; for others it is in the Promised Land, at the end of days; in all cases, the real world is simply not here.

It is one of the virtues of Dr. Heschel's book that it neither slurs over the unique features of the Jew nor exploits them for the benefit of secular vanity or religious apologetics. He has, rather, tried to penetrate to "The Inner World of the Jew in East Europe" (this is the book's sub-title) and to demonstrate his thesis, befitting a professor of Jewish mysticism, that "the world is sustained by unworldliness." There are few books in English that plunge us so deeply into the depths of Jewish reality. For Dr. Heschel is in no doubt that the "inner world" of the East European Jew is more real than all other worlds.

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S is frankly an essay in "sacred history." It makes no claim to be objective, complete, or disinterested—it claims simply to be true. It is an elegy, sometimes a rhapsody, over what the author believes to have been "the golden period of Jewish history." It is sentimental throughout and will probably offend some readers who have seen their sentiments too often, too casually, and too unscrupulously assaulted; this is unfortunate, for Dr. Heschel, it seems to me, does not aim to manipulate the reader, but is sentimental because under the circumstances this is a not inappropriate mood.

The book is impossible to review, in the sense of saying "what it is about." It opens with a contrast between the "aristocratic," cerebral, and Arabic-influenced Sephardic Judaism and the "folk" Judaism of the Ashkenazim of East Europe; it goes on to discuss Jewish piety and Jewish learning, Cabalism and Hasidism, Jewish wit and Jewish melancholy, ***pilpul*** and saintliness. It is more evocative than informative, though there are few who will not learn something from it. In the end, it is "about" a people "who at midnight lamented the glory of God that is in exile and spent their days peddling onions." We have already been instructed in the life of the "onion-peddlers" in Maurice Samuel's books on Sholom Aleichem and Peretz. Now we are given an insight into the people of the midnight lament.

DR. HESCHEL possesses a fervor that is unrestrained and a piety that is immoderate. If they are not entirely contagious, the fault is as likely the modern reader's as his. But it must be said that he has not given the reader every advantage. For one thing, his prose style is too frequently artificial in its eloquence. English is not Dr. Heschel's native tongue, and his command of it is impressive. But he has, I think, made an error in trying to achieve an archaic splendor which sits uneasily on the rude Anglo-Saxon that is at the base of the language. Santayana got away with it—just. He is a dangerous model to copy.

More important is the fact that Dr. Heschel occasionally succumbs to what can only be called romantic simplification. Poland was not, after all, Paradise, and Eastern Europe cannot make the unconditional claim of the Garden of Eden. His statement that Ashkenazic Jewry "borrowed from other cultures neither substance nor form" is unjustified, as is his delicate disparagement of the Sephardim as, in some sense, not truly Jewish. It is significant that no mention is made of the "false messiahs" who stirred Ashkenazic Jewry to its depths, for that would suggest frustrations and anxieties incompatible with the perfect inner life the book describes. Dr. Heschel seems unwilling to concede that the Jewish reality of Eastern Europe was something *in* history and not outside it, and that Zionism and Yiddish secularism, for all their religious impulse, were indeed a revolt against the image of the Ashkenazi. We fail to hear in this book the voice of the young Bialik, who wrote, upon returning to the ghetto:

I come, my brothers, into your company!
Together we will rot. . . .

Nor do we recognize our harassed and disbelieving ancestors, who fled to America, not only from the pogroms, but—very many of them—also from the rebbe, the Hasid, the ghetto.

Cookery Without Frippery

JEWISH COOKERY. By LEAH W. LEONARD.
Crown Publishers. 497 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by AGNES MCCREA DAVIS

AFTER the recent spate of worthless cookbooks—muddle-headed and pretentious, confusing gourmet cooking with an excessive use of truffles, and confounding the user by inept directions—*Jewish Cookery* is doubly welcome, for its technical excellence as well as for its unusual collection of delectable dishes.

As a kitchen manual it is admirably organized, with complete tables, glossary, etc. The recipes are both accurate and flexible, since Mrs. Leonard allows for imagination on the part of the cook, giving many "basic" recipes with suggested variations, and directions that are clear, concise, and orderly (the rarest virtue in a cookbook). I find that if you but do as she says, and she says it so simply, you cannot make a failure, even the first time, of the most unfamiliar or elaborate dish. There are, for instance, her remarkable pastries—the perennial bugbear of the wary and the downfall of those not gifted with a light hand: the recipes for these defy all laborious conventions (one even calls for *hot* water) and are given with an astonishing economy of ingredients as well as of effort, and yet they result in the richest and the most airy and delicate pie crusts I have ever tasted. They remain crisp and flaky amid fruit syrup or meat gravy, and each one has a particular flavor and texture to complement its particular kind of filling.

Her pastries are but one example of Mrs. Leonard's expertness in the matter of formulating workable recipes. She gives all the short-cuts that can be taken without sacrifice of quality, yet at the same time she writes for honest cooks, however inexperienced, not for can openers, and for enjoyable cooking, not for kitchen slavery.

WHILE *Jewish Cookery* comprises several types of dishes, it is of course the traditional ones of Jewish cooking in many lands that give the book its special interest and character. Here, collected for the first time in English, are recipes for which there has long been an unfulfilled demand by all lovers of good food. And the food itself is good, as food. Rich, succulent, and varied, but also sound eating and economical—though not exactly slimming. For anyone who has not been brought up in familiarity with this food, the book opens up a whole new wonderland of cookery to explore, and to those who have, I am sure it will offer new and improved recipes—as it does for the group of standard American dishes (strawberry shortcake, spoon bread, etc.) that come within its scope.

It is a pity that, along with those standard American dishes, the author has made some unfortunate excursions into the Jello Belt. The inclusion of "candle" salads and their frippery kin may have been intended to increase the sale of the book in Suburbia, but that demand seems to me abundantly supplied by the manufacturers of patent foods (in Glorious Technicolor) and by the women's magazines. This commercial trash, though it may come within the Jewish dietary laws, seems particularly out of place in a book like Mrs. Leonard's. There seems to me no excuse for associating these nasty concoctions with Jewish food, and they cheapen regrettably what would otherwise be a wholly distinguished compendium.

Mrs. Leonard's exposition of the Dietary Laws, of the Fast Days and the Feast Days, with preparation of the special foods for each, makes this a book of religious and historical as well as practical interest. She details the Jewish concept of food hygiene and of sound nutrition as it was worked out long ago, and it is fascinating to see how modern laboratory-achieved knowledge of food properties and needs confirms the ancient prescriptions and proscriptions, even when modern methods of food handling invalidate the hygienic need for many of them.

All in all, *Jewish Cookery* is a book Brillat-Savarin would not have scorned.

Jews on the Move

TO DWELL IN SAFETY. By MARK WISCHNITZER. Jewish Publication Society of America. 368 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by SIDNEY LISKOFSKY

THIS is the story—scholarly and documented—of one hundred and fifty years of Jewish migrations, beginning around 1800, and told mainly from the standpoint of how immigration was organized and controlled by Jewish organizations. As originally planned, at the request of the American Jewish Committee, this study was to limit itself to the history of such organized efforts to assist and direct Jewish immigrants. But after the research had progressed somewhat, it was expanded to include data on the social and political factors motivating migrations, the migration policies and practices of various nations, the basic statistics of Jewish migrations, and the problems of adjustment faced by the immigrants in their new homes. For this task, Dr. Wischnitzer is admirably equipped, having for many years occupied an important position in the center of Jewish migration activity, as secretary-general of the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden from 1921 to 1937, and as research director in the European Office of the Joint Distribution Committee from 1938 to 1940.

The main point of Dr. Wischnitzer's report is that until World War I the efforts to organize, coordinate, and rationally plan Jewish migratory movements were largely unsuccessful. Migration was spontaneous and unorganized, and migrants set forth on their own initiative, with little or no knowledge of the economic conditions, languages, and customs of the countries to which they were moving. Only after the First World War, and particularly after the rise of Nazism, was a significant measure of rational organization achieved. Thus the history of this century and a half presents, in the author's frame of reference, the unhappy paradox that when migration was comparatively unhampered, organization was inadequate or lacking, while when organization finally became adequate, Jewish migration had been narrowly restricted.

In conceiving of this as a "paradox," however, the author highlights the main deficiency of the book, namely, the lack of sufficiently generalized themes or theoretical points of reference. For it is apparent, and this thought properly developed could have served as one major point of reference, that organization was absent or deficient during the 19th century just because migration—particularly in the latter decades—was comparatively unimpeded. Freedom to move was an unchallenged human right over most of the globe. We have not a "paradox" but a significant manifestation of a more general development: the encroachment of the state on a human right, and the effort of the individual—through voluntary organization—to resist this encroachment.

Migration, whether into or out of a country, must—in a world of planned societies—be subordinated to presumed economic interests and requirements, and to the need to preserve supposed racial or cultural patterns. The century of "laissez faire" was also the century of "laissez passer." Starting with the First World War, however, we have witnessed the progressive deterioration of this freedom of migration, so much so that even in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—a document not legally binding on its signatories, and whose only purpose is to set an international moral standard—the United Nations was unable to agree to recognize freedom of migration as a human right. (Such recognition was accorded only to the freedom of *emigration*, not of *immigration*.) The 20th century thus became the century of racial and national quotas, of vocational selection schemes, passports, and exit visas.

Voluntary non-governmental organization, in short, develops as a counterpoise to the Leviathan state, which regards freedom of movement no longer as a "right," but as a "privilege." (In the words of a Supreme Court majority opinion, handed down on January 16, aliens cannot enter this country "under any claim of right"; admission is "a privilege granted by the sovereign United States Government on its terms.")

DR. WISCHNITZER reviews the innumerable ideas and schemes for resettlement and colonization developed and discussed over the decades, with the gnawing hindsight of "what might have been" appearing like a haunting refrain throughout the book. When opportunities for resettlement were present, the interest and drive were lacking; when necessity provided the spur, the possibilities had shriveled.

Indeed, one of the significant themes that recurs throughout the book, and which might have been articulated in a more generalized discussion, is the division—present at almost every important conference of Jewish leaders during the past century—between the advocates of mass emigration and those who stressed the struggle for civic and political equality at home. This division, for example, was present at an international conference at Brussels in 1872, called to consider a plan for mass emigration from Rumania. Proposed by Benjamin Peixotto, then President of B'nai B'rith and American consul-general in Rumania, who had secured the prior agreement of the Rumanian cabinet, mass emigration was opposed by the representatives of Rumanian Jewry, who argued that it would encourage Rumania to consider itself discharged from its obligation to grant civic rights to Jews, and was rejected.

This issue was also the subject of heated controversy at a conference called by the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden in Frankfurt in 1904, which resolved to oppose the encouragement of mass exodus and to stress efforts to improve the lot of the Jews in their native lands. These resolutions were adopted to satisfy Russian and Rumanian Jewish delegates who refused to relinquish the struggle for civic equality, as well as to quiet the fear of American and British Jewry who were concerned lest their own position be endangered by a flood of Jewish immigrants.

The latter fear suggests another motif that Dr. Wischnitzer might have given more extended treatment. While his data indicate that, with few exceptions, Jewish communities in the receiving countries welcomed Jewish immigration, there was some concern with the effects of such immigration on their own status. In the United States, this anxiety led to undertakings to disperse Jews through the country, such as the Industrial Removal Office and the Galveston Project, which by the time of the outbreak of World War I were responsible for

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the movement westward of over one hundred thousand Jews. Inevitably, all such schemes were at best only partial successes. Israel Zangwill explained why in a speech in Vienna in 1906: "Were I a Russian imigrant I would give the following reply to the suggestion of moving away: No, I would say, here my soul at least finds satisfaction. Let your millionaires move to other cities, they possess so many resources. I possess only my Jewish atmosphere."

Dr. Wischnitzer's conclusion is that, on the whole, and despite failures of planning and coordination, the record of achievement of the Jewish agencies—particularly during the aftermaths of the two world wars—is monumental. In comparison, the efforts of intergovernmental bodies are shameful and tragic failures.

He does not disguise his bitterness at the League of Nations' handling of the refugee problem; as early as December 1920 the League turned a deaf ear to a petition of the Alliance Israélite Universelle to assist in the resettlement of Russian Jews. He discusses in detail the tragically unhappy record of the League's High Commissioner for Refugees and the failure of the Evian and Bermuda Conferences—frustrated in large measure as a result of Britain's anti-Zionist politics.

If there is any "lesson" Dr. Wischnitzer would wish the Jews of the world to derive from the experience of the past, it is the importance of organization, coordination, and centralized planning. One would have preferred some more precise indication of the bearing of this lesson in the present situation, after the new turn of Jewish history inaugurated by the establishment of the Jewish state. What is the significance of the existence, for the first time in the history of the Diaspora, of a state whose proclaimed policy is the principle of free and unlimited immigration for Jews? What is the significance of the virtual end to emigration from Europe and, as a consequence, of immigration to the Western Hemisphere? What is the meaning of the new fact that the sole remaining reservoir of Jewish emigration at this time is the population of the Moslem countries of North Africa and the Middle East? What do all these developments imply for the future of Jewish organizations, for organizational plans, programs, and ideologies? What factors caused the reversal of the attitudes of such nations as the United States to immigration—and is there any hope for a change in this attitude?

This reviewer wishes that Dr. Wischnitzer had spent more time on these, as well as some other more general questions. As it stands, however, with its scholarly compilation of data, his book is a most useful contribution to the literature on migrations.

The Roots of Ritual

Thespis. Ritual, Myth and Drama in the Ancient Near East. By Theodor H. Gaster. Henry Schuman. 498 pp. $8.50.

Reviewed by Francis Fergusson

This book is an extremely erudite study of the seasonal rituals of several societies of the ancient Near East, as they may be traced in surviving writings. But, as the subtitle suggests, it is not only of interest to philologists and archaeologists, but to students of drama, and to all who have been fascinated by *The Golden Bough* and the many studies growing out of it which have been made of the ritual forms underlying Greek tragedy and other literature. Professor Gilbert Murray, one of the most distinguished students of the ritual pattern, says in his introduction, "Dr. Gaster has turned his vast learning to demonstrating, in fields far beyond my reach, the existence of a similar pattern, based on the same seasonal drama, in the extant remains of Canaanite, Hittite, Egyptian, and Hebrew literature. He has shown that here too the same variety of forms obtains, and he has traced the essential structure backwards to purely functional procedures and forwards to residual survivals in hymns, psalms, and other forms of liturgical composition. The result is to my mind very impressive."

If Professor Murray disclaims the philological and archaeological "reach" of Dr. Gaster, it is clear that few will be competent to discuss the scholarship of this work. But Dr. Gaster offers the merest layman a number of interesting ideas about ritual, myth, and drama, which he has derived from his researches; about the relationships of these cultural forms, and their "attenuation," in various later forms of literature.

One of Dr. Gaster's most fertile ideas is that of the "topocosmos," as he calls it: the picture of the world and of human life therein which a primitive society forms in a particular region, such as the Nile Valley. The topocosmos or place-cosmos differs from later, more abstract and universalistic cosmologies in its immediacy and concreteness. It is an imaginative ordering of climate, seasonal changes, rivers, mountains, and vegetable and animal life as the inhabitants of a certain region actually experience them. And it is in this rich nexus that the seasonal ritual is developed, to assure, pray for, and celebrate that rhythmic succession of birth and death, the fertilization, sprouting, and withering of vegetation from which man actually gets his living. Then comes myth, which like ritual is closely analogous in form in many ancient societies: the story of the human hero who fights, dies, and is born again—the "basic" myth in its myriad versions—to make the ritual order more humanly significant and intelligible. Drama, in its root form, includes both myth and ritual. A great dramatist—an Aeschylus or a Sophocles—inherits this cultural form, and proceeds to use its manifold analogies between the withering and renewal of vegetation, and the dying and coming-to-birth of man's animal life, to reveal the deaths and rebirths of the spirit.

DR. GASTER proceeds to apply these ideas to certain ancient texts, including the Canaanite "Poem of Baal," the Hittite "The Combat of the Weather-God and the Dragon: The Myth of the Puruli Festival"; the Egyptian "The Ramesseum Drama," and a number of other shorter pieces. Most of the book consists of translations of these texts, with Dr. Gaster's philological and archaeological notes, and his explanations of the particular ritual and topocosmos upon which each is based. He thus gives suggestive glimpses of several ancient, sacramentally ordered societies, which appear to be closely akin (with geographic and climatic variations) to the more familiar primitive culture of the Greeks. Among the most interesting of these translations are thirteen of the Old Testament Psalms.

It has been known for some time now that most of the Psalms were written for liturgical purposes, but Gaster explores the nature of this liturgy in more detail, assimilating it to the pattern common to all the ancient Mediterranean cultures and perhaps, as he suggests, all ancient cultures everywhere. He also provides his own translations of these Psalms. His English is not to be compared, as English poetry, with that of the King James version; but it has its own simplicity and vigor, and it brings out very clearly the essentially dramatic form of the Psalms.

IT SEEMS certain that it will take a long time to digest the material which Dr. Gaster here presents, much of it accessible in his book for the first time. I suppose the scholars will get to work upon it; but in the meantime, one or two of his ideas are also of more general interest.

Dr. Gaster says that because ancient drama has an over-all form and meaning, it is more than mere mimesis or imitation. The form of drama is that of the seasonal ritual which itself celebrates the topocosmos. My objection to this formulation is that Dr. Gaster seems to be limiting the notion of mimesis to mere literal or photographic representation, as we know it in modern realistic literature. Aristotle (whom Dr. Gaster quotes) did not use it in this sense, for he says that tragedy imitates not men, but "life and action," and individual characters only with "a view to the action." If mimesis is understood in this way, the ancient seasonal ritual itself may be regarded as mimesis: an acted-out imitation of the succession of the seasons. "Mimesis" would then designate a

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primitive but fundamental mode of human understanding; a way of grasping the movements of human life *before* verbalization and rationalization. Primitive peoples depend largely upon mimetic responses and histrionic means of communication, as one can see in the case of the Pueblo Indians, for instance; yet we too, for all our proneness to theorizing, may learn this language. After all, we do get something out of ancient myth, and ancient drama with its ritual poems, though both are opaque to discursive reason. The notion of mimesis, properly understood, may help to bridge the gap between our own understanding and the rich world of ancient man.

Most of Dr. Gaster's readers will be familiar with some of the artists and thinkers who have been nourished by the new insights into primitive culture: Eliot or Bergson or Joyce, for instance. Such readers will find Dr. Gaster's notion of the topocosmos valuable and stimulating. We suffer a kind of homesickness for that comparatively stable, simple world; it often looks to us like the natural home of the human spirit. But in spite of the artists and thinkers who have used the insights of ancient man as a means of understanding contemporary experience, we do not know what to make of these insights. We no longer feel dependent upon the order of visible nature in a particular region. We are enclosed in our machinery, mental and mechanical, with its artificial paradises, its screaming debacles, and its expanding, uncontrolled power. Dr. Gaster speaks of the "attenuation" of the ritual forms in literature, but does not indicate where he would place the optimum point of human understanding in the shifting perspectives of culture. The allegorizing and rationalizing of ritual and myth seems to have started very early; but just when does the life leak out? It is hard to think of an *Oedipus Rex* as attenuated in any sense.

But it was no part of Dr. Gaster's purpose to suggest answers to such questions as these. The great fertility of his work for those who are not specialists lies in his presentation of ancient community life and culture, and in his demonstration that the ritual basis of Hebrew and other Near Eastern literature is very similar to that of Greek drama and literature.

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